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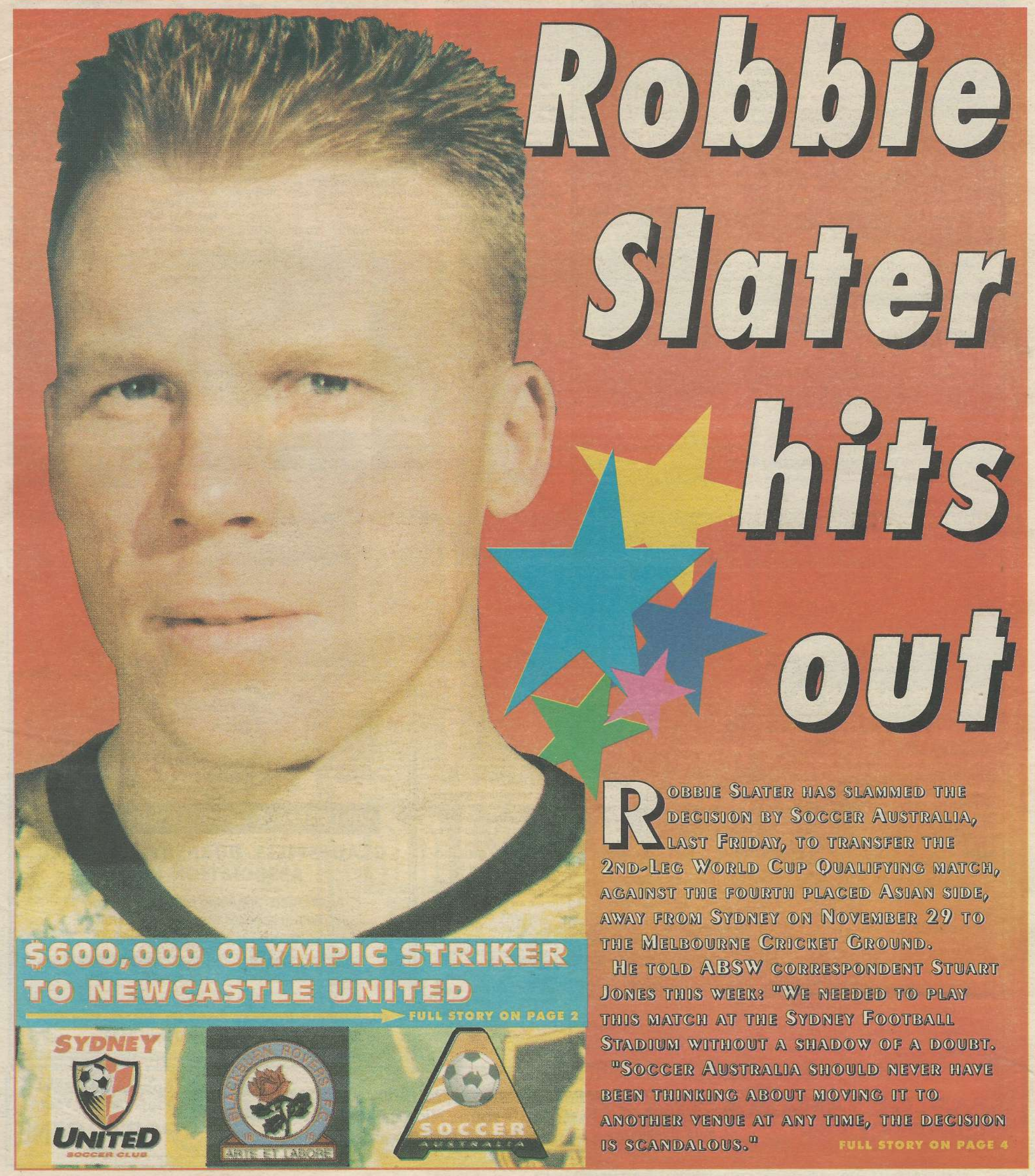
AUSTRALIAN AND BRITISH

SOCCER WEEKLY

VOL 18 No. 841 — TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 9, 1997 • REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST — PUBLICATION No NBQ5726 $2.50



Robbie Slater hits out

ROBBIE SLATER HAS SLAMMED THE DECISION BY SOCCER AUSTRALIA, LAST FRIDAY, TO TRANSFER THE 2ND-LEG WORLD CUP QUALIFYING MATCH, AGAINST THE FOURTH PLACED ASIAN SIDE, AWAY FROM SYDNEY ON NOVEMBER 29 TO THE MELBOURNE CRICKET GROUND.

HE TOLD ABSW CORRESPONDENT STUART JONES THIS WEEK: "WE NEEDED TO PLAY THIS MATCH AT THE SYDNEY FOOTBALL STADIUM WITHOUT A SHADOW OF A DOUBT.

"SOCCER AUSTRALIA SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN THINKING ABOUT MOVING IT TO ANOTHER VENUE AT ANY TIME, THE DECISION IS SCANDALOUS."

FULL STORY ON PAGE 4

$600,000 OLYMPIC STRIKER TO NEWCASTLE UNITED

FULL STORY ON PAGE 2

SYDNEY UNITED SOCCER CLUB

BLACKBURN ROVERS F.C. 1875 ARTIS ALBORIS

SOCCER AUSTRALIA

Scrap Final Series for Juniors

— Bob Brooks

It has become a tradition in virtually all Australian sport to decide the season's champion by a Finals Series. Sometimes there are eight teams in the initial hunt, in other codes there may be as few as four.

The pressure on a team to 'make the Finals' can be frightening. The 'race for the Finals' often takes place from the halfway point of the season.

Debates have raged within Soccer as to which is the most valuable or prestigious, to win the home and away competition throughout a four or five month period or a quick four weeks 'knock-out' style end of season series.

At the senior semi or full professional level the players can usually handle all the pressure which a Finals series imparts.

In junior or district competitions there are many drawbacks with a 'Top something' method of deciding the best team.

First and foremost it is important to examine why we encourage children to take up sport.

Pleasure, involvement, commitment, learn how to play in a team, as part of the team, and in our sport, learn skills and how to put them into practice.

We want the child to play the World Game.

With a competition that has a Finals series we stop players from getting on the park and being involved in the game.

Yes, we stop play! In an eight team league by the beginning of August four teams, maybe 60 youngsters, in every competition are branded as failures. 'Failures' because their team has not made the Final Four.

The tag of 'failed' could reflect through to a child's everyday life. At school, in social contacts just because in their team winter sport they finished lower than fourth.

August is still winter. The investment made by parents in boots, socks, shinguards, shorts deserves to be more fully utilised.

By having a way for all teams to keep on competing until the end of August, then Club canteens benefit more. With only half of teams in a Final Four format, less players are involved, parents no longer attend grounds and by default canteen takings decline or disappear altogether.

The boast is made that we have over 160,000 players registered and playing in the part of Australia known as NSW, in Soccer terms.

If we brand 80,000 of them part of a team which failed to make the Finals, then children can become disillusioned very quickly. They may not want to play Association Football again — they could be lost to the game possibly forever.

There is a way to fix this, to keep all players going until the end of August, to boost canteen income and therefore Clubs' revenue. To possibly halt the loss of so many youngsters in their mid-teens. It is a way where no one is branded a failure.

Still play the home and away competition. The winner of their league is the Premier. Then play a Round Robin series but institute a promotion and relegation system. The Premiers are promoted to one grade higher, the last team goes down one, for the Round Robin.

The eight team league is divided into two Groups of four. Each team within the Group plays the others once, making a minimum of three games, or three weeks into August.

On the fourth weekend the winners of the two groups within the league play off. It is still possible to 'do the double' but it is harder.

There are no failures. Parents investments are better used over maybe four extra weeks. Interest is maintained and heightened for at least three weeks.

Teams which finished bottom have a chance of a win by being put in at a much more appropriate level. Teams which won say Division 2 can show how good they are against the First Division lot.

Crowds at the Round Robin Finals do not matter because the additional numbers attending games during the Round Robin Series would boost the income of all clubs.

It is fairer, less demanding, provides less tension between teams, gives strong teams a better class of competition and most important is a positive for the younger player.

Worth giving a go, don't you think?

UTS OLYMPIC STRIKER OFF TO NEWCASTLE UNITED-$600,000

By JOHN ECONOMOS

UTS Olympic's World Youth striker Carlos Gonzales will fly out for England today (Tuesday) for an extensive two week trial with Kenny Dalglish's Newcastle United in an agreed deal that could yield the Sydney club $600,000, reports ABSW's John Economos.

But the 19 year old striker who was spotted in Malaysia earlier this year at the World Youth Championships, is not the only player that UTS Olympic stands to lose almost immediately to a giant overseas club.

Australia's attacking right midfielder Brett Emerton is getting his bags packed ready to head off to Europe, (France in fact) , for serious trials with first division side Bordeaux.

The president of UTS Olympic Mr Simon Konstandinidis last night informed ABSW: "Our Club is very happy for young Carlos and we have spoken to the Newcastle people that we would require $600,000 should the player make the grade with them."

When **ABSW** spoke to young Gonzales he stated: "The negotiations were all teed up by Brian Turner from 'Grand Slam International'.

"Newcastle asked me to send a video of some of my games and Kenny Dalglish seemed to like what he saw and now has extended an invitation to trial with them for two weeks."

'Lady luck' played a large part in Gonzales' participation in the last World Youth Championships in Malaysia. The skilful youngster was a late drafting into the Australian Youth side when Brisbane Strikers' dynamic attacking midfielder Kasey Wehrman unfortunately broke his leg over there.

Meanwhile Olympic's other exciting young international about to also depart Australia, is Brett Emerton..

The hard running Emerton also was spotted at the recent World Youth Championships at Kangar in Malaysia.

When ABSW spoke to UTS Olympic's 18-year old powerful flank-runner, Emerton informed us: "The French coach Ross Gernot seemed interested in me in Malaysia. When he returned to Bordeaux he got their General manager Paul Battiston to contact Olympic's president Simon Konstandinidis.

"Of course I'm keen to go to France as it could be very good for my career," ended Emerton.

The robust flank midfielder, after 18 months, graduated from the A.I.S. before exploding on the scene last season in the Ericsson National League, to make a spectacular debut with UTS Olympic at the tender age of 17-years.

Exodus at Olympic

MR KONSTANDINIDIS evaluated to ABSW: "We have lost players left and right. To date, from last season, we have lost Alistair Edwards, Milan Blagojevic, Davie Barrett, Steve Refenes, David Mitchell, Abbas Saad, Anthony Franken and maybe Norman Tome as well.

"Now it looks like we could stand to lose Carlos and Brett on top.

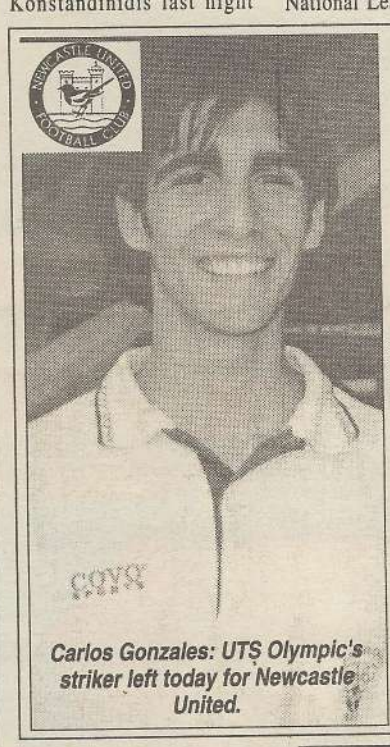
"We have signed Bobby Catlin and Jean Paul De Marigny from Marconi and last night we signed Parramatta Eagles' and the NSW Super League's top goalscorer Steve Karavatakis.

"Our coach, Geoff Harcombe, has spoken to West Adelaide striker Pablo Cardozo, Marconi's Andy Harper and West Adelaide's sweeper Robbie Hooker. But that's all it's been, just talk."

But Sydney United's newly appointed coach, and former Australian World Cup striker David Mitchell, is in the same, if not worse, position than his coaching colleague at Olympic, Harcombe.

Mitchell has taken over the reins of an 'evaporated' United side that during the off season has seen no less than nine players savaged from last season's Grand Final XI, by interstate and overseas 'pirahana clubs'.

A desperate Mitchell has snapped up an experienced defender from Glasgow Rangers in Scotland as well as a midfielder from Swindon Town in England, but now has joined the hunt for Cardozo and Hooker, both former UTS Olympic players from three seasons back.



Carlos Gonzales: UTS Olympic's striker left today for Newcastle United.

Mr Simon Konstandinidis: UTS Olympic's president.

Brett Emerton: Off to Bordeaux France.

AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY

7-9 Garners Avenue, Marrickville NSW 2204. Tel (02) 9560-3900. Fax (02) 9564-1224 • 9550-9332
Published every Tuesday by FL Press Pty Ltd. 7-9 Garners Ave Marrickville NSW 2204

DISTRIBUTION
NSW/ACT: FLP Pty Ltd. 7 Garners Ave Marrickville NSW 2204. Tel: (02) 95603900
VICTORIA: FLP Pty Ltd. Unit 9, 405 Flemington Road, North Melbourne, 3051. Tel: (03) 9329-1636 Fax: (03) 9329-1342
QUEENSLAND: Queensland Newspaper Campbell St, Bowen Hills 4006 Tel: (07) 3252-6011
SOUTH AUSTRALIA: Advertiser Newspaper Ltd. Waymouth St, Adelaide 5000 Tel: (08) 8218-9329
WESTERN AUSTRALIA: Pan Hellenic Emporium, 67 James Street, Perth 6000. Tel: (08) 9328-4779

STAFF
ACTING EDITOR:.....MICKY BROCK
SUB EDITOR:.....Aidan Ormond
STAFF REPORTER:.....John Economos
LAYOUT:.....Karen Lucas McKenzie
TYPESETTING:.....Jodee Rogers
PHOTOGRAPHY:.....Jorge Gonzalez
.....Phone: 015 709-318
SCANDESK:.....Stewart Johnson
COLOUR SCANS:.....Bill Hawthorne
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Les Murray Comments . . .

AUSTRALIA'S WORLD CUP FORTUNES

As Australia's last gasp World Cup qualifier nears — it's due in November — the excitement and sense of anticipation builds. Goose bumps form and the heartbeat quickens at the thought that the predicted reality, this being Australia's easiest World Cup path ever, is about to be consummated. We are surely just 180 minutes away from a place on the greatest sporting stage on earth.

The notion that the fourth best nation in Asia, whom Australia plays in a two-legged play-off in a couple of months, is a surmountable hurdle is a popular and proper one. I am among those who were profoundly relieved when our World Cup path was announced in 1995. A handful of island nations from the Pacific, then New Zealand, then Asia's fourth best. Wow! So much easier than Scotland in 1985, Colombia — as it might have been had we not been dumped by Israel in 1989 — and not to mention Argentina in 1993.

But doped and paralysed by the thought that, at last, we have been given a fair go, some of us confused easier with easy. History should have reminded us that Asian hurdles, even New Zealand hurdles, might be surmountable but easy they are not.

The lessons of history are these: In eight attempts to qualify for the World Cup, Australia has failed seven times. Out of those seven failures, we fell only twice to so called first world (European or South American) opposition. Five times, I repeat, five time times Australia was dumped by either an Asian foe or New Zealand.

BREAKING THE DUCK

OUR FIRST venture into World Cup territory was in 1965 when we made the bold bid to qualify for the 1966 finals in England.

We were helped enormously by politics. Out of 16 places in the finals series only one was allocated to the nations of Africa, Asia and Oceania combined. In protest at the outrageous snub, all nations in those regions except Australia and North Korea withdrew. So, with our multicultural squad of players (a wet-eared Johnny Warren among them) we trotted off to neutral Cambodia for a two-match play-off against North Korea. We were spanked 9-2 on aggregate, 6-1 in the first game.

1970 CAMPAIGN

A BETTER prepared team, under coach Joe Vlasits, made a tilt for the 1970 Mexico World Cup. Travelling more than Marco Polo, trekking the vast expanses of the Far East and the breadth of Africa, we confronted Israel at the last hurdle. A thoroughly fatigued Australia lost 1-0 in the hotbed of the Ramat Gan in Tel Aviv. In the return, in Sydney, we led 1-0 until a dreadful defensive error allowed Israel's Mordechai Shpigler to equalise. We got done. And Israel, an Asian team, did the doing.

1974

IN 1974 we of course made it. But our third world neighbours made it a tough ask. After overcoming New Zealand, Indonesia, Iraq and two hellish games against Iran, we surmounted South Korea by one goal in neutral Hong Kong. We were in but, our confidence bruised by the Asians, we had to take a negative, cautious attitude in the finals.

1978

OUR TILT at the 1978 finals, with successful 1974 coach Rale Rasic snubbed and replaced by Jim Shoulder, was the biggest disaster — and all at the hands of Asian opposition. Kuwait and Iran were our major opponents. We were convincingly beaten by both. It was an emotional nightmare that set Australian football back years.

1982

THEN CAME worse, the darkness of 1982 and the short lived campaign for the finals in Spain. Facing New Zealand we drew 3-3 in Auckland and were outclassed 2-0 in Sydney. It was end of the short tempestuous reign of the eccentric Rudi Gutendorf. We were gone. The Kiwis, oh the pain, went all the way to the finals to face Brazil.

1986

IN THE 1986 campaign, Frank Arok's astute preparation had us overcoming New Zealand and Israel, including a win in Tel Aviv. But Scotland, 2-0 winners in Glasgow and lucky escapees with a 0-0 thriller in Melbourne, took us out. The dream was gone.

1990

MORE HEARTBREAK was to come four years later. Arok had us drawing 1-1 in Israel but losing 2-0 in Auckland. Needing to beat Israel in Sydney to make it to the next hurdle against Colombia, we drew 1-1. That was it. Arok was exiled from the elite of Australian Soccer for ever and we had been, again, robbed of our place in the sun — by Asian opposition.

Having sounded these bells of caution, of course I am still convinced Australia will qualify, whoever it meets on November 22 and 29. There has been a massive improvement in Australian player quality since the days when we were demonstrably vulnerable to Asian opposition. Australia could field two quality teams composed entirely of European-based professionals. None of our looming Asian opponents, no matter how strong, unpredictable or mysterious, can match that.

But to say it will be easy is dangerous nonsense. Oh, and one more history lesson. Whenever World Cup qualification came down to a final showdown with one opponent we failed to win the home leg every time: 1969 v Israel 1-1; 1973 v South Korea 0-0; 1981 v New Zealand 0-2; 1985 v Scotland 0-0; 1989 v Israel 1-1; 1993 v Argentina 1-1.

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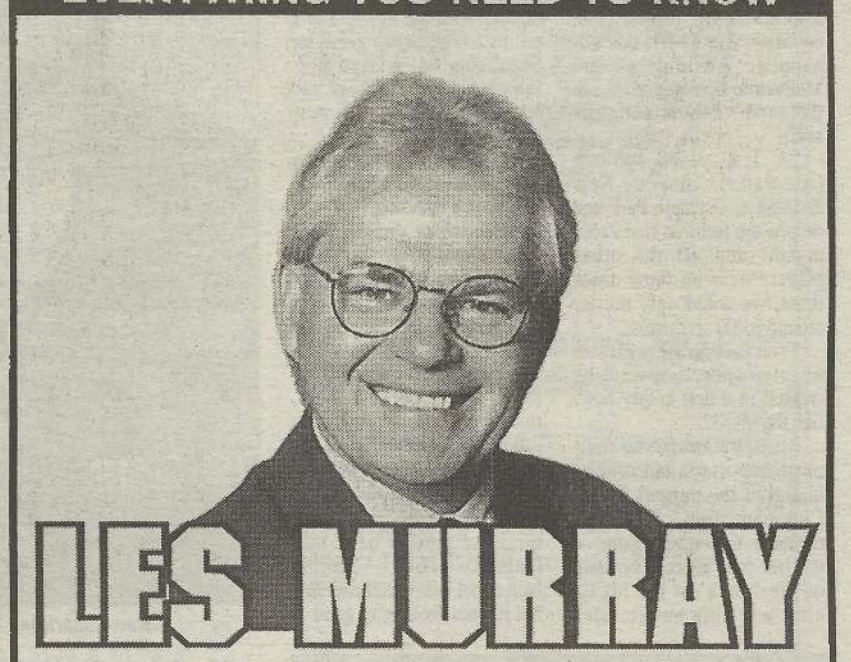

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MCG – A SUITABLE VENUE?

— CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE —

In considering the alternatives, what other venues in Australia could possibly hold such an important and prestigious match?

"The stadium in Brisbane cannot hold a World Cup qualifier and as for the Melbourne Cricket Ground, it is an aussie rules and cricket venue, not a football ground."

The decision to move the game to Melbourne was made, presumably, with a mind on larger gate receipts and other associated profit related areas, but Slater doesn't feel this will happen: "Would 60,000 Melbourne fans turn out to see the game? I think not!", he said.

"A few years ago we (Australia) played New Zealand at Olympic Park and despite the fact that Ned Zelic, myself and all the other players were on show down there, we could only muster around 8,000 spectators.

"You have to ask what sort of atmosphere would be created in a half empty bowl like the MCG?

Australia are facing their most important and crucial match of the current World Cup campaign, and most certainly the biggest game of the last four years. The state of the 'pitch' at the MCG, after a testing aussie rules season, is something we're told will not come into play as the ground staff will have at least six weeks to prepare the surface.

"The pitch is likely to be totally unsuitable. It will be uneven and we would never have played there before. It'll be just as alien to us as for the away side," continued Slater.

"The Football Stadium in Sydney is just that, a football stadium and we should play there."

"OK, so I'm a Sydneysider but in terms of football grounds, there was no choice to be made. It is too important a game for us to have had Soccer Australia mucking around with the venue, for whatever reason," he said.

Slater is passionate about the game and hates missing matches but has been carrying a groin injury for around six months which has required surgery to correct. The operation took place last month and looks to have been a success but has the non-stop seasons played a significant part in players picking up these niggling injuries: "I compounded the problem in a pre-season warm-up game for Southampton, missed pre-season training and have had little to do with the new manager so far.

"I played in the opening two games of the Premiership campaign because of the injury crisis at the club. The surgeon said I was silly to do so but the boss asked me."

In both matches, Slater played well below his best and couldn't have played at all but for plenty of pain-killing injections but is now, thankfully, on the road to a full recovery but what of his chances, if picked, of playing at the MCG?

"I've set myself a personal target of getting back into league action against Liverpool on September 20, but it's not looking to good at the moment as I only started running again this week."

Playing a full, often gruelling, Premiership season in the UK before returning home for the Nintendo and World Cup matches and then straight back into action in England once more, has become an occupational hazard for many of our top players. The chance of injury is always greater the more you play and the recovery time can be slowed down by the lack of rest between seasons. How much more of a danger is the possibility of set-backs which could hinder Australia's chances of going to France 98.

"Our boys have not had a break between seasons and are coming off of some solid games. The British lads have had the summer off.

"At the moment our boys are in great shape and in brilliant form but it will start to count against us around November-December time, the time slot allotted for the games against the fourth placed Asian side by FIFA. This is the period that can make or break a top quality player who just hadn't had the time to rest."

"Kevin Muscat has been a regular in the starting eleven at Crystal Palace and Stan Lazaridis is working wonders for West Ham at present but, unfortunately for Southampton, no team can afford to miss the likes of Le Tissier (broken arm) and Egil Ostenstadt. It's early days yet though."

Speaking of club form and it takes no working out that Southampton have had a poor start to the campaign: "We have struggled and I think or biggest mistake was in selling Eyal Berkovic to West Ham, where he's starring alongside Lazaridis.

"It's too early to predict who will win the championship at this stage but Arsenal, Manchester United, Liverpool and Newcastle will up there fighting it out for the top spot as usual no doubt."

Speaking with Slater and invariably the conversation returns to the Socceroos and the Green and Gold shirt he wears with such pride.

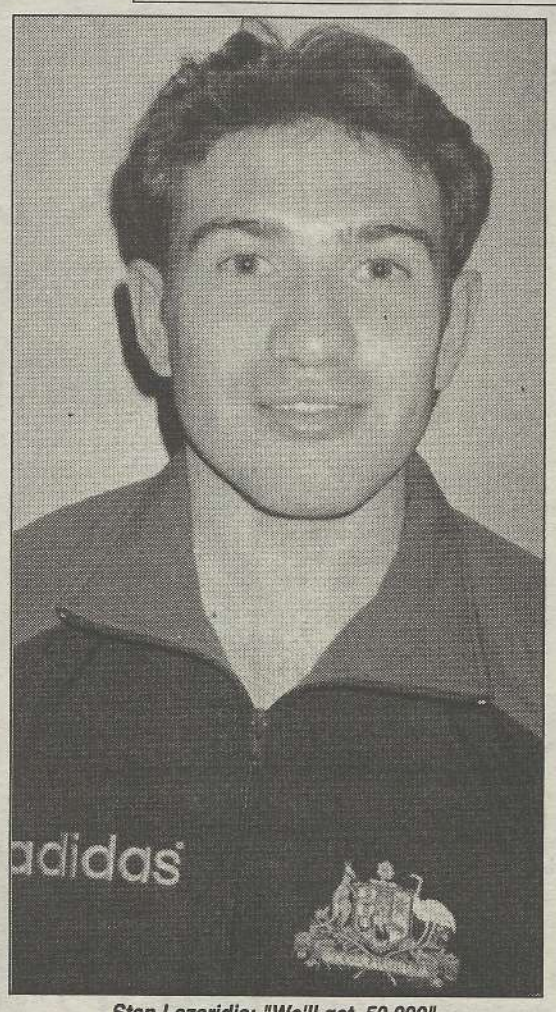
"These qualifying matches are always in the back of my mind. It's a great incentive for all of us to get into peak physical shape."

Would Slater relish playing for Australia in his beloved France next year?

"It's the one thing I desire, want more than anything else, I want more than anything to be a part of a World Cup Finals team and I'll do whatever I can to complete that dream.

"As for the opposition we meet, I don't really care who they are. China played here in England recently, against teams like Notts Forest, and won all their matches so they can't be all that bad.

"In the end we have to defeat whoever we meet so why bother with a preference?"



Stan Lazaridis: "We'll get 50,000".

Alex Tobin: Excited by the prospect.

Craig Foster: Thinks it's a great idea.

WHAT THEY HAD TO SAY ABOUT THE SWITCH

"I had some strong reservations at first but now they've been laid to rest, I'm quite excited about the prospect."

—Alex Tobin — Australian captain

"It's a great business decision by Soccer Australia but at the end of the day it's about the players and whether the venue is conductive to football. In the game against Argentina, the fans were close up against the pitch at the SFS but it comes down to whether the players are comfortable at the MCG. They'll be pumped up for this one and it should be a great match, the stadium was full for the Bledisloe Cup game and this should be no different. More people follow our code of football in Melbourne than rugby union so let's get out there."

—Andy Paschalidis — Fox Sports presenter

"I think it's brilliant. Depending on the first leg result, we could really pack the ground out. I see nothing wrong with the ground and the cold Melbourne air, and possible wet conditions, will be handled better by us than any Middle Eastern or Asian team. It's a good gamble."

—Craig Foster — Current Australian international

"I think it's a great idea ... if you want the spectators to watch on TV. I don't always want to sound too critical but the venue just isn't suited to Soccer. The pitch will have to be in the middle of the ground and the fans will be so far away in the stands. The idea is to disturb and disrupt your opponents, put them off their game, and the crowd plays a huge part in that. It's hard to see that happening at the MCG. If this has been done in an attempt to gain extra revenue, it's a big gamble to take. Millions of dollars will be on offer if we make it to France in 1998 but very little will come this way if we fail at the final hurdle."

—Rale Rasic — 1974 Australian World Cup coach

"I think it's a great idea playing the match at the country's premier sporting venue but Melbourne's record of turn-outs for international Soccer matches is a disgrace. I feel every supporter in Queensland or NSW has every right to feel aggrieved by the decision and you have to ask whether these fans should be rewarded for their past loyalties or try something new. Let's hope the experiment works and the Socceroos go all the way."

—Greg Blake — Soccer Australia Magazine

"We should be alright at the MCG. We'll get 50,000 and Sydney's not big enough to hold that many. It would be nice to avoid the cricket pitch area but as a Perth boy I've played on them before at the WACA and its been OK."

—Stan Lazaridis — Australia and West Ham

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South off to a Flying Start

By DWYGHT TUFFNELL

South Melbourne have teamed up with one of Australia's biggest sports management and marketing groups.

Flying Start, the company which markets and promotes some of the AFL's biggest names, will be working with the Lakers to broaden and develop the clubs corporate sponsorship and membership base.

"We will be very active in promoting soccer's positive image as 'The World Game'" said Flying Start Managing Director Ricky Nixon.

The company plan to work with the club to introduce a business plan.

"We're here to see that South Melbourne remain financially robust and work towards its long term plans of fully developing the Bob Jane Stadium."

Nixon said that attaining a strong membership base was something the two parties are going to work towards.

"No club, no matter how strong, can be content with its membership base.

"Unless you reach a physical maximum, like Barcelona's fans, you can never have enough members."

Flying Start will promote South Melbourne and Australian soccer in a way never seen before.

"We are keen for the media to see soccer as not some ethnic based sport, but as a game that welcomes all Australians.

"We, as Australians, should take pride in the performances of the Socceroos, Olyroos and Joeys, just as we do with our cricket team or our Olympians."

Former Australian Soccer Players' Association boss, Brendan Schwab, is the new Chief Executive Officer of the Lakers.

He was lured to South by what he said, "was an exciting opportunity."

"(South Melbourne President) George Vasilopoulos was able to convince me that the next great challenge for Australian soccer is for the Ericsson Cup clubs to be fully professional on and off the park" Schwab said.

"This game lacks one great thing, and that is a National League that can stand side by side the AFL, basketball and other professional team sports."

The new CEO is also keen to see the membership base broadened. "With the adjunct of Flying Start to our marketing, South Melbourne will become a membership based club, whilst being loyal to its traditional supporters, will be appealing to others who think that soccer is a great sport no matter where you come from."

SOUTH MELBOURNE 4
CARLTON 1

South Melbourne turned Carlton's first official match into a nightmare at Lakeside Stadium on Friday night.

The Lakers beat the Ericsson Cup's new club 4-1 in the Tynan-Eyre charity match.

South started with two of its new signings, Goran Lozanovski and former player, Con Boutsianis, and both figured in all four of South Melbourne's goals.

Boutsianis set up Michael Curcija for the first in the 11th minute before Nick Orlic headed in a 'Bootsy's' free kick four minutes later.

Lozanovski was fouled inside the penalty area by Frank Catalano, just a minute into the second half, and Steve Panopoulos converted the spot kick.

Two minutes later Carlton pulled a goal back through Daniel Allsopp, the Young Socceroo playing against his former side.

Curcija added a second ten minutes before the end with an expert header from Lozanovski's pinpoint cross.

Carlton coach, Eddie Krncevic, conceded that his defence is the biggest worry at this stage.

"The defence had to be changed around a little bit with some players being out. We still have four weeks to work hard on it."

South Melbourne: Petkovic, Iosifidis, De Amicis, Orlic, Clarkson (Liparoti 78), Panopoulos (Coveny 54), Trimboli, Curcija, Boutsianis (Baser 54), Polak (Goutzioulis 8), Lozanovski.

Carlton: Anastasiadis, Trajkovski, Anthopoulos, J.Markovski (B.Bacak 67), Douglas, Stergiopoulos, Grella (Catalano 31), Allsopp, Lapsansky (Sapazovski 74), Vlahos (Marusic 46), Vargas.

Con Boutsianis: The "Disco King" is back.

PARRAMATTA EAGLES SOCCER CLUB

YOUTH LEAGUE & JUNIORS

are seeking expressions of interest from qualified level 2 or level 3 Coaches for their 4 Youth Teams and the Under 11 and 12 Teams for 1998

PLEASE FORWARD YOUR APPLICATION WITH C.V. TO:–
C/- Melita Stadium, Everley Road, Chester Hill 2162

MARK ENVELOPE "COACHING APPLICATION"
Closing Date: 15 September 1997

PROUD OF OUR RECORD

COACHES REQUIRED 1998 SEASON

SOUTHERN DISTRICTS — CLUB MARCONI

Applications are invited for the following junior coaching positions at Marconi Fairfield and Southern Districts

YOUTH LEAGUE (Marconi Fairfield & Southern Dists)
GRADES 13, 14, 15 & 16

JNR LEAGUE REPS (Southern Dists)
GRADES 11, 12

MINIMUM REQUIREMENT IS A LEVEL 2 COACHING CERTIFICATE

Please appy in writing to:–

TOM McCULLOCH Youth Development Officer, Soccer Office, Club Marconi, Marconi Road, Bossley Park NSW 2176

APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY FRIDAY 12 SEPTEMBER, 1997

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BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS SOCCER CLUB

Are seeking expression of interest from qualified coaches for the following positions:–

First Grade, U21, U18 and Goalkeeper coach

SEND ALL APPLICATIONS TO THE SECRETARY:–
PO Box 656 Bankstown 2200

CLOSING DATE 16TH SEPTEMBER

Canterbury & District Soccer Football Assoc YOUTH LEAGUE & JUNIOR LEAGUE TRIALS

1st Division 1998

Canterbury Association will commence Junior League and Youth League Trials for its teams in the age grades

Junior League: U11s & U12s
Youth League: U13s to U16s

On: Tuesday 23rd September
Thursday 25th September
(continuing to Nov/Dec)

Time: from 5.30pm

Place: Punchbowl Oval, Viola Street Punchbowl

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT NUNZIO VIZZARI ON **9745 1847 or 0411 339200**

PENSHURST WEST SOCCER CLUB

1998 U/18 ELITE SQUAD TRIALS

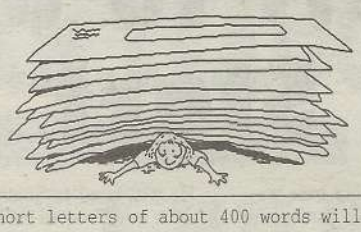
Penshurst West S.C. will be conducting Trials for its 1998 U/18 Elite Soccer Squad in OCTOBER 1997

This Squad will contest the NSW State Cup and is a Develoopment Squad for the Year 2000
Present U/17 Players with experience looking for quality Soccer in their future without the politics or high expenses are invited to Trial for this Elite Squad by Phoning:–

9570 9784 (H) OR
041 942 5954

Letters to the Editor

Have your say on any soccer issue in the world. Preference will be given to short letters. Include daytime phone number for verification.



The Editor,
AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY
PO BOX 155,
MARRICKVILLE
NSW 2204
Fax: (02) 9550-9332

Short letters of about 400 words will be given preference in this column.

The opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect those of this newspaper

RELEGATION – MISTAKES?

Dear Sir,

Now that the First Division premiership is over I would like to point out how wrong the original decision of the NSW Soccer Federation was to relegate the two clubs: Hurstville City Minotaurs and Stanmore Hawks. Both have achieved considerable success in the meantime.

According to the Federation's thinking (which was wrong), both these clubs should have been competing in Second Division this year!

The big crowd (nearly 2,000) in their match at Seymour Shaw is another indication that these are the sort of clubs Soccer needs.

Also the success of Parramatta Eagles in winning the Grand Final, in all three grades, brings back memories of another 'mistake' in throwing out this team from the Ericsson Cup a few years ago.

Bill Lironis,
Hurstville, NSW.

Editor's note:
Many things become clear with hindsight and maybe the clubs mentioned were spurred on to greater things by the decisions that were made?

Congratulations Parramatta

Dear Sir,

As a regular reader of your paper, and a Parramatta Eagles supporter, I would like to congratulate my club for winning both the Premiership and Grand Finals in all three grades. This is a great achievement for our coach, Dougie Utjesenovic, players, administrators and all our loyal supporters, who stood behind our team all season.

We will be back next year better than ever, for a tilt at back to back championships.

The Eagles will fly for ever. I like to thank everyone involved with the Club: mission accomplished.

Congratulations to the high flying Parramatta Eagles.

Joe Papa,
Pendle Hill, NSW.

Restrictions not Biased

Dear Sir,

The so called 'restrictions' imposed by SA upon Sydney United should not be viewed as bias against this particular club.

While it was that some of this club's supporters who were partly to blame for the disturbances, SA are not entirely free of guilt, as I feel they should have provided better security as it was their fixture.

Having made this point, I strongly believe that other clubs ought to consider a number of changes if they wish to be viable in the future.

Relying on only ethnic support is a thing of the past and if some continue to follow this road, I am afraid they are doomed to failure.

Ideally, in order to 'kick' this code along and give it a true Aussie flavour, Sydney should provide just two teams plus one from the Illawarra region and one from Newcastle. Victoria should have four teams, while South Australia should have two. Queensland also should provide two, one from Brisbane and the other incorporating North Queensland, while Perth and maybe Tasmania, one each.

A strong First Division should be in existence to enable promotion and relegation to take place, just as it is world wide.

Ron Novello,
Little Bay, NSW.

Editor's note:
Interesting comments but which Sydney club would you give the chop?

Temporary Seating Needed

Dear Sir,

If Australia's final World Cup qualifying match is to be played at the MCG, I would like to offer some advice. With such a big ground, why not put temporary seating on the ground as well as a temporary low level fence about 25 to 30 metres in from the existing one.

A few extra gates could be cut out of the existing boundary fence to allow easier entry and exits.

Also police and security could sit on chairs inside the new boundary fence so as not to block the view of the public. By doing that you not only bring the spectators closer to the action, but you also increase the ground capacity by 20,000 or more.

An aggressive marketing and advertising campaign is needed as well. With little more than two months left before the most important game in four years on home soil, time is running out to organise Australia's biggest Football event.

If rugby union can attract 90,000 spectators to a game in an aussie rules city, then Soccer Australia should get a record 120,000 to attend Soccer's most important international match in years.

I will be there, even though it's nearly 2,000 kms away. So quit stalling and make a decision soon, so you can get on with selling the game through the media.

Dominic Scullino,
Helensvale, QLD.

PS: If Australia's national team plays enough games under the positive Terry Venables over the next nine months, there is no reason why we can't make the top ten in the world.

Editor's note: Temporary seating would be a wonderful idea except that it would restrict the view of those in the lower level seating: by solving one problem you are creating another. Nice try anyway.

THANKS ABSW

Dear Sir,

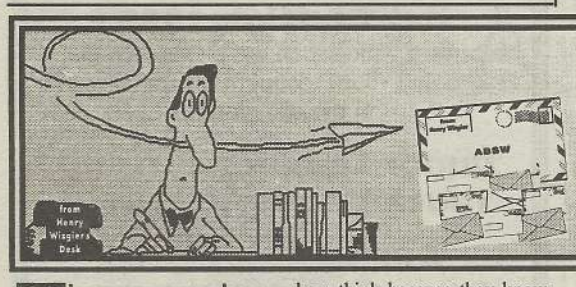
I have just returned from five weeks in Europe with the Female Socceroos (the Matildas) and have been catching up on the last five ABSW editions. I would like to both congratulate and thank you and your paper for the excellent ongoing coverage of Women's Soccer.

I hope this is reciprocated in sales. A particular mention must go to your correspondent, Janene Mar, for her consistent coverage at all levels.

It takes a great deal of work to fill a regular column and I think she is doing an excellent job.

So on behalf of all the players thank you once again and if I can ever be of service please do not hesitate to contact me.

Anissa Tann-Darby,
Rockdale, NSW.



Letter from England

by HENRY WIZGIER

The new season here has kicked off in a heat wave which would do credit, if that is the word, to Australia. The average daily temperature hovers in the lower 30s (centigrade not fahrenheit) and, unusual for England, the humidity is high.

No wonder, therefore, Stan Lazaridis also kicked off with a bang on the opening day. He had a hand in both West Ham goals which gave them all three points at newly-promoted Barnsley — a Yorkshire club who have never tasted the fruits of the Premier League. 'Stan the Man' has taken to his role as a wingback like a duck to water and created panic every time he received the ball along the Barnsley right. But he won't be given that sort of time and space against the likes of Manchester United or Arsenal.

Anyway, 'youse' probably all saw that on ABC's Monday night English Soccer. They say 'absence makes the heart grow fonder' but as far as football is concerned, it makes you appreciate some things. The incredible fact, which many Australian Soccer fans don't realise because they take it for granted, is just how good the worldwide coverage gets on your free to air TV, thanks to SBS and ABC.

Sure, over here the daily papers, Soccer magazines and satellite TV channels will supply you with enough Soccer to keep you awake for 24 hours a day and you still wouldn't be able to digest all of it. But, it's nearly all English. Your average fans here think because they know a few names like Zola, Bergkamp and, since the Tournois-de-France, Roberto Carlos, they know the world game.

That's why teams like Turkey's Galatasaray can come to Old Trafford and win. Hardly surprisingly, therefore, that the English public still haven't cottoned on to the fact that Australia has a world ranked team.

Last year ABSW published an interview I did with Australia's leading goalkeeping coach, Fred Wall, in which he claimed that John Filan was the best goalkeeper he had ever coached: better even than Mark Bosnich.

Gordon Strachan, the Coventry City manager, obviously didn't read that interview, because he insisted on keeping John sitting on the bench while 'old man' Ogrizovic went through the annual motions of keeping Coventry in the Premier League.

Roy Hodgson, Inter Milan's former coach and now boss of Blackburn Rovers, must have read Fred Wall's comments because, despite Jack Walker's bottomless money barrel behind him, he decided to buy Filan when he could have gone shopping in Europe.

It's true that Filan was brought in as Tim Flowers' deputy, however, he didn't have to wait very long for his opportunity and, he took it rather well against of all teams, Bosnich's Aston Villa.

Unfortunately though, 'Bozza' himself was absent and it was probably the best move he's ever made because Rovers' strikers, Chris Sutton in particular, were unstoppable, smacking four past Bosnich's shell-shocked deputy Michael Oakes.

It is doubtful whether even 'Adolf', as he has been christened by Spurs fans, would have been able to stop that 'blitzkrieg'.

Craig Foster, a player ABSW has been predicting will take up a foreign career, has finally made it and arrived at surprise surprise .... Portsmouth. I wonder why he chose Portsmouth?

Perhaps it's because it's on the coast and it reminds him of Sydney. In fact, the football rumour mill is churning out some interesting gossip concerning this once-proud football club, that is now owned by a former English coach not unknown in Oz.

He also appears to be rather fond of 'Oasis' (the drink not the band!), which he advertises on TV while his mug shot, painted like an Aborigine, is plastered about on billboards everywhere. Probably helps to beef up the miserly wage Soccer Australia are paying him.

Anyway, things should start to take off soon for this modest First Division club, as it appears that 'Pompey' have found a billionaire American 'sugar-uncle' who wants to turn them into another Blackburn Rovers no-less, and buy Rovers a place back in the top flight. He obviously hasn't heard of Middlesbrough yet.

Nevertheless the question begs, will Aussies still be in such demand at Fratton Park as soon as the bank balance allows for the purchase of Italians, French etc?

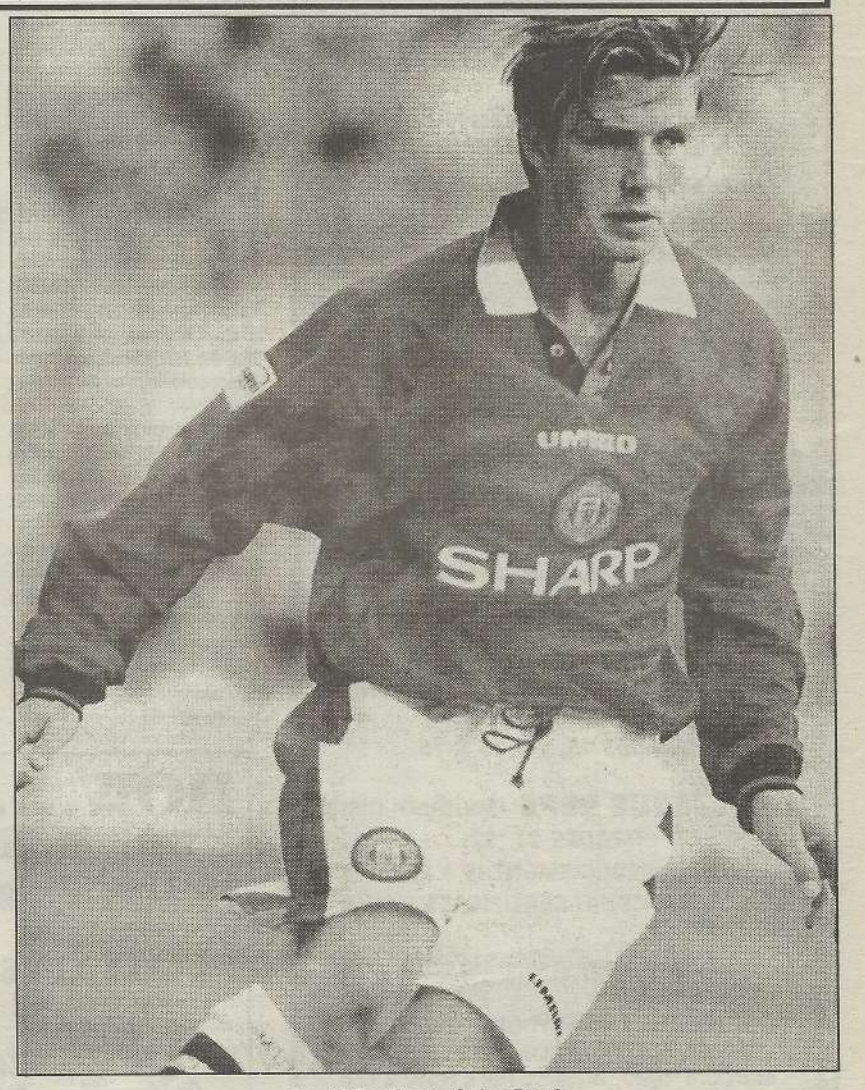
The changes that have taken place in English football over the last decade are literally quite mind-boggling.

The game here has gone beyond the ranks of show-biz and joined 'big-biz'. Make no mistake, football is now one of Britain's most successful industries and Manchester United are just the tip of a gold-berg.

David Beckham, the golden boy of English football, is dating one of the 'Spice Girls' who are, of course, the hottest pop music act in the world at the moment. In fact their record sales have already launched them up into the Michael Jackson and Beatles category.

Even George Best in his thinner, clean-shaven heyday couldn't pull one of the Abba girls (though he probably had a good try, knowing Georgie Boy!). He had to make do with 'Miss World', not a bad alternative as far as 'looks' are concerned, but hardly Premier League in status. Yet the most amazing sign of the reverse in stature between football and pop music is the fact that, according to the media, it is the Spice Girl (whatever her name is), who is seen with Beckham and not vice-versa.

Which is great for the likes of Beckham etc. but what about the poor old grass-roots fans? They have been trodden into the grass in the stampede for season tickets by the stockbrokers, bank managers, barristers and company directors. It is hard to imagine that not too long ago the game of Soccer in England was known as the 'working class ballet'. It is now more expensive and more difficult to get into — not to mention more prestigious — to be seen at Old Trafford or Stamford Bridge than at Sadlers Wells, one of the world's greatest ballet venues. Rudolf Nurayev must be turning in his grave.



David Beckham: Spice Boy?

NSW & QLD News

BREAKERS IN FREE OFFER

By DANE SKAFTE

The Newcastle Breakers Supporters Club is offering the opportunity for members to win a season pass to the Breakers home games for 1997/98.

All new and existing members up to the second game of the season will go into a member's draw for the season pass, which will take place at Breakers Stadium during the second home game.

To become a member, and be in the running to win, ring the secretary on 4952 3372 after 5pm, or the Breakers office on 4951 2722 for a membership form. Membership costs only $10 a single or $15 for a family.

You can keep up to date with news on the Breakers Website — http//www.breakers.hunter.net.au or email: breakers@hunter.net.au.

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IN MORE exciting news from Newcastle, Topper Breakers have announced the appointment of Shane Pryce as captain for the 1997/98 Ericsson Cup season. The 24 year old defender will be one of the youngest captains in the Ericsson Cup.

He has played 46 cup matches and is delighted to be given the opportunity to lead his home side at the highest level. Pryce captained the side twice last season after former skipper Troy Halpin was unavailable.

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NORTHERN NSW Development Officer, Tracie McGovern, returns to her home town of Wauchope this week to assist with the Sports Day, organised by Telegraph Point Public School's Leonie Cosgrove.

"The Sports Day is for small schools of the Port Macquarie district so that the children may participate in a team sport of their own age group that they would not normally have in their own school because of student numbers," Cosgrove said.

McGovern is the first female Development Officer to be appointed by the Northern NSW Soccer Federation, and is currently a member of the NNSW Women's Soccer team, an Australian squad member and studying sport related subjects at Business College as well as working in schools teaching Soccer skills.

She has a hectic schedule: this week she will play for NNSW in the Grand Final of the Waratah Shield, in Sydney tomorrow (Wednesday), and then travel back to Taree on Thursday for Soccer Development sessions at Taree Primary School from 11.30am to 2.30pm. On Friday she will be present at the Lansdowne Soccer day from 10.00am to 2.00pm.

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NORTHERN NSW First Division club, East Maitland Magpies, will conduct their annual six-a-side spring competition from the beginning of October through to the middle of December.

Games fees are set at thirty dollars per team, with a maximum of ten players per team/per night. The games have twenty minute halves, and are controlled by Federation referees.

According to Secretary Daphne Debreceny, many of the players that participated in the competition were asked to trial with the Senior Grade and Youth sides.

"This competition is not only for those youngsters currently playing Soccer, but for those who wish to play in a well organised and controlled sport during the summer months," she said.

"It would also familiarise the youth and their parents with the local First Division club, the committee behind them plus the coaches and players of the club. This is important to us as we have some high profile players and coaches in the club like David Lowe, David Jones, Craig Carter, Allen Gilday and Cameron Hudson who will be participating in the six-a-side competition. These players act as inspiration to younger players to further their careers," she concluded.

For further information contact Wayne Drayton on phone (49 343 325).

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EAST MAITLAND have appointed former Breakers captain David Lowe, and Steve Piggott, as club coaches for the 1998 season. Club president Wayne Drayton said he wished to clarify earlier press reports on the coaches for next season.

"David (Lowe) and Steve (Piggott) will take control of the coaching of all three squads next year and will be assisted by Robert McKenzie," he said.

"Earlier in the season we had a coaching clinic, conducted jointly by David and Steve, and found it to be very successful which led to the appointment of them as joint coaches of the three squads.

"At this stage no appointment has been made of captain," Drayton concluded.

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NEWCASTLE TOPPER Breakers kept their Waratah Cup chances alive with a 1-0 win over Canberra Olympic last week at Darling Street Oval. Despite only having nine men for the majority of the second half, Canberra kept pushing forward and looked very dangerous in the midfield.

Newcastle took the lead in the 63rd minute after two good touches by Mark Wilson and Jason Bennett, with Clayton Zane turning one defender and slotted a low shot past Paul Jones. Canberra lost their first player when Peter Mazic was sent off by referee Otto Scevak for appearing to elbow striker Troy Halpin in the 56th minute.

Canberra were reduced still further when Victor Fernandez was sent from the field for allegedly striking a Breakers player in the 70th minute.

Canberra Olympic player/coach, Ray Junna, said after the match he thought his side played well against Newcastle.

"They are a pretty quick side and really only had a couple of chances.

"We only had nine men for the second half and to hold them to a 1-0 lead was a good result," Junna said.

Newcastle will now play Marconi tomorrow night (Wednesday) at Marconi Stadium, in what should be a very exciting game.

STAR PROFILE
JIMMY MACKAY

1974 AUSTRALIAN PLAYER

Date of Birth: December 19th, 1943.
Birthplace: Edinburgh-Scotland.
Previous Clubs: Airdrie, Melb: Croatia, Melb: Hakoah.
Last Club Played For: South Melbourne Hellas.
Position: Central midfielder.
Nickname: None.
Marital Status: Wife Marylin-children (Malcolm and Jacqueline).
Current Occupation: Carpenter.
Best Aspect Of Your Game Then: Vision, good passer long & short.
Most Difficult Opponent: Speigler (Israel).
Most Impressive Local Player Today: Alex Tobin.
Most Impressive Local Player In Your Days: Johnny Watkiss and Ray Baartz.
Most Impressive Australian At The '74 W.C Finals: Our captain Peter Wilson and Col Curran.
Favourite Overseas Player: Man Utd's Pat Crerand & Dennis Law.
Favourite Overseas Club: Hearts Of Midlothian.
What Qualities Make a Good Coach: Able to understand the mentality of all his players and know their limits.
What Would You Have Liked Changed Leading Up To Going To The World Cup Finals Back In '74: Would have preferred more lead up games in West Germany than the ones we had outside.
Honours: Victoria's State squads, 31 full caps for Australia.
Special Advice To Soccer Australia In Assisting Our Current National Team **To Qualify For France '98 World Cup Finals:** Essential to get all national squad together well before the last two Asian qualifiers in November to play games together.
Most Memorable Moments Playing For Australia: Probably going out onto the pitch in our first World Cup Finals match against East Germany, the 2-0 away loss to Iran and my goal in Hong Kong in the third match vs South Korea.
Hobbies Outside Soccer: Lawn bowls & relaxing with good friends.
Best Goal Seen Scored: Mine against South Korea in Hong Kong.
Favourite Food: Steak.
Favourite Drink: Beer.
Car You Drive Today: Holden Commodore.
Favourite TV Show: English Soccer and Cricket.
Favourite Movie: The Sting and Get Shorty.
Favourite Actor/Actress: John Travolta and Sharon Stone.
Preferred Music: Pop and Country and Western.
Favourite Comedian: Ricky Fulton.
Pet Hates: All ignorant people, swearing in front of women.
Special Advice To Young Players: Never lose sight of the bigger picture.
Person You Would Most Like To Meet: Peter Wilson—again.

ILLAWARRA NEWS

By PHIL MURPHY

Lysaghts can clinch the Illawarra Premier League championship if they beat Fernhill at home on Saturday. That is the simple equation after Sunday's important 2-0 win against Dapto at Brandon Park.

Lysaghts are now level with Bulli going into the last round, crucially though, they have a superior goal difference.

If both teams are successful on Saturday, Lysaghts will take the title.

Lysaghts coach Phil Matias was pleased with the effort put in by his players. They dominated the first half with goals from Anthony Guido and veteran defender Mike Hollifield. Dapto created very little but coach Stuart Beedie wasn't disappointed with the performance.

Beedie (who has been appointed coach for Wollongong City youth squad) said Lysaghts scored two "soft" goals.

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CONISTON beat Wollongong Olympic 3-2 in the final of the Bampton Cup at Brandon Park on Wednesday night.

A crowd of 1,134 turned out to watch an action-packed game in which Coniston striker Dean Merola scored a hat-trick.

If his striking partner, Graeme Fletcher, had been on target, Coniston would have had the final wrapped up well before the end.

As it was, Olympic battled away and could easily have forced extra time.

Coniston led 3-1 but defender Peter Kotamanidis headed in a George Antoniou corner to keep Olympic's hopes alive.

Merola scored first but Olympic got level through striker Manny Mavridis, who showed fine close control before finding the back of the Coniston net.

After Merola scored two more goals it looked all over, but the plucky Olympic never stopped battling away.

Northern United won the Youth Cup Final, beating Port Kembla 1-0, with the exciting Matthew Bailey getting the goal.

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ON SATURDAY, Coniston and Olympic met again in a league match and it finished 1-1.

Once again, Merola got Coniston's goal after George Antoniou had given Olympic the lead from the penalty spot.

Bulli missed another chance to get a hand on the Championship Trophy when they lost 2-1 at home to Port Kembla, who had to defend desperately after leading 2-0 at halftime, courtesy of goals from Dominic Cario and Justyn Roberts.

Replacement Gareth Gardner, however, snatched a goal for Bulli nine minutes from the end. Once again it was a game which Bulli dominated, but with nothing to show at the end.

Wollongong White Eagles came from behind to beat Fernhill 2-1 at Clunas Oval.

Shane McCulloch put Fernhill ahead with a penalty — but Dragan Panic and Danny Petkovic scored for the Eagles.

Northern United pushed up into fifth place with a 3-0 win over Balgownie at Judy Masters Oval. The O'Brien brothers, Aaron and Gavin, scored before halftime and Terry Dowd grabbed the third.

On Friday night, Cringila had little trouble disposing of bottom team West-Figtree 4-0 at Crehan Park.

ROVERS INTO FINAL

By GLENN DAVIS

In Mareeba on Saturday night, grand finalists Taringa Rovers clinched a Queensland Cup Final showdown against Wynnum Wolves next weekend with a hard fought 3-0 win against a spirited Far North Queensland (FNQ).

Taringa, backing up a week after their Grand Final defeat by Brisbane City, were on the back foot from the opening whistle against FNQ, who dominated possession and had the visitors camped in their own territory for much of the first half.

Taringa had to rely on a controversial penalty, awarded by Brisbane referee Ted Kearney in the 21st minute, before they managed to exert their superiority over the polished home side.

Young Taringa striker Glen Kolpak fired a cross into the box from the right flank, where midfielder Danny Stowers was ruled to have been pushed in the back by a FNQ defender.

Sweeper Dimitri Theochari stepped up to take the pressure kick and made no mistake, slotting it to the left of keeper Angelo Serafin.

With the pressure valve released, and with Far North Queensland forced to change tactics as they searched for an equaliser, Taringa gradually gained the upper hand, with their first shot of the match in the 31st minute coming from midfielder Danny Invincible.

The second half started furiously when a powerful strike from Invincible brought off a spectacular save from keeper Serafin.

Taringa took total control in the 76th minute when midfielder Stu Collins broke down the right flank before passing inside for striker Ian Hutchinson, who laid off for Kolpak to side-foot home from close range.

The young marksman, who was on the receiving end of a bristling halftime attack by Rovers' coach John Ogden, almost pulled off a spectacular goal from outside the box when he pivoted and volleyed a thundering shot onto the crossbar.

With Taringa dominating, Hutchinson missed a golden opportunity to add his name to the score sheet when he failed to round keeper Serafin in a one-on-one.

Rovers hammered the final nail in the FNQ coffin one minute from time when substitute Cameron Williamson crossed perfectly into the box; and Kolpak was on the spot headed for his double.

Wynnum won their semi final showdown against Sunshine Coast with a 5-0 thrashing on Sunday.

Their old brigade led the way through striker Geoff Malty (who bagged a double), while Billy McDermott, Wayne Corbett and Brendan Rodgers each scored one.

Wolves started sensationally with Maltby opening the scoring after only two minutes, before Rodgers made it 3-0 in the 20th minute.

They went to the halftime break in a commanding position at 4-0 with two further goals from McDermott seven minutes before the interval, and one from Malty, who picked up his double on the stroke of half time.

In a unfortunate incident, the match was delayed for 20 minutes after Wynnum midfielder, Tony McKinless, was treated by a doctor and taken to hospital when he began convulsing.

Goals 2002 with Dez Marton

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Indoor Soccer Season Kicks Off September 15 Seniors, Juniors and Girls

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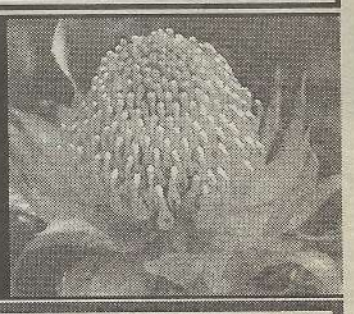
For all enquiries, Registrations and Enrolments ring:—

DEZ MARTON

OFFICE: 9556 3386 MOBILE: 041 901 2002

NSW Soccer Federation ...

NSW Waratah Cup MIDWEEK SPECIAL . . .



Group A — HAWRYSIUK DESTROYS UTD

Michael Hawrysiuk, a bit part player for Bankstown City during the Super League season, scored twice in his side's 2-1 win over defending Waratah Cup champions Sydney United at Melita Stadium.

The young striker made the most of his opportunity in first grade, scoring a goal in each half, adding further to the headaches for United's new coach David Mitchell.

With uncertainty surrounding United's future in the Ericsson Cup, Bankstown took full advantage of their predicament and were far more committed and desperate for the win.

However, had Tony Krslovic been more accurate with his left foot shot in the third minute, the story could have been totally different.

As both sides battled away in the middle of the park, and with chances few and far between, Bankstown started to gain the upper hand territory.

Then in the 33rd minute they forced a breakthrough when Robert Gomez burst clear of Dean Culina on the left and headed towards goal. His powerful shot from 15 metres was parried by John Perosh but only as far as Hawrysiuk, who with an empty net in front of him, slammed the ball home.

He made it 2-0 soon after the break, when a corner wasn't cleared by the United defence and Hawrysiuk, lurking at the near post, crashed his shot home from close range.

United stepped up a gear but found Cam Celik and his defence in a determined mood.

A good ball from substitute Dominc Usalj in behind the defence, with 15 minutes left, allowed Abbas Saad to notch his first goal for his new club. He slipped by his marker and tucked his shot under the sprawling body of Lions' keeper Robert Raguz.

Any chance United had of forcing a draw or a win evaporated in the 80th minute when Jacob Burns received his marching orders for a second yellow card.

In the other Group A game, beaten Super League grand finalist, Bonnyrigg White Eagles, easily accounted for Mt Pritchard 4-1 at Marconi Stadium.

Two goals to Stefan Janic in the 14th and 18th minute and one to David Crowden in the 15th minute always had the Eagles in control.

Frank Serratore pulled a goal back for First Division Mt Pritchard but Johnny Ghisso gave the Eagles a much needed goal difference booster with a fourth goal, nine minutes from the end.

Stefan Janic: Two goal hero.

WARATAH CUP MIDWEEK RESULTS

Bankstown City Lions 2
Hawrysiuk (38, 64)
Sydney United 1
Saad (74)
B'yrigg W Eagles 4
Janic (14,18), Crowden (15), Ghisso (81)
Mt Pritchard 1
Serratore (32)

Group D — CANTERBURY SHOCK UTS OLYMPIC

By JOHN ECONOMOS

Last Wednesday, Canberbury Marrickville Olympic shocked their more illustrious opponents, UTS Olympic, downing them 2-0 in round six of the NSW Soccer Federation's rich Waratah Cup at the St George Stadium.

The Berries, from the NSW Super League, cracked UTS open as early as the third minute, with industrious central midfielder Mark Percy beating Olympic's new goalkeeper Bobby Catlin.

The giant keeper started the match despite having aggravated a calf muscle to his right leg while warming up.

In the 55th minute a hungry and mobile Canterbury doubled the scoreline. Tenacious midfielder Jerkovic scored from a cross fired in from the left flank to shatter the Ericsson Cup side.

Canterbury's powerful target man, George Kategianis, constantly pierced Olympic's defence lines with his strong raids.

Both sides created many chances, especially in the first session, but selfish finishing failed to yield more goals.

Adding insult to injury, Olympic fielded no less than seven of their new signings for the coming Ericsson Cup including Catlin, Ante Juric, George Sorras, Jean Paul De Marigny, Chris Kalantzis, Eric Hristodoulou and Kimon Taliadoros.

Starring for Canterbury were giant 20 year old striker George Kategianis, intelligent midfielder Jerkovic and support striker Christforidis.

An obviously proud Canterbury coach, John Xipolitas, stated: "My defence was most solid and my whole team performed brilliantly. It was easily our best performance of the season and our build ups were very good."

Bobby Catlin: Olympic's giant new goalkeeper.

UTS Olympic: Catlin, Baillie, Juric, Sorras, De Marigny, Emerton, Tsekenis (Hristodoulou 46), Ardone, Kalantzis (Augerinos 75), Poimer, Gonzales (Taliadoros 46).

Canterbury Marrickville: Tolios, Raeburn, Tsigolis, Hantzis, Shepherd (Oustambasidis 85), Mendez, Percy, Jerkovic, Nikas, Kategianis (Georgallis 82), Christoforidis.

SCORERS: CANTERBURY: Percy (3), Jerkovic (55).

REFEREE: Alex Spirovski.

CROWD: 2,245.

WARATAH CUP MIDWEEK RESULTS

Cant/Marrickville.....2
Percy (5), Jerkovic (71)
UTS Olympic.....0
Canberra Cosmos 1
D Milin
Stanmore Hawks 0

COSMOS OFF TO WINNING START

Canberra Novell Cosmos may have finished ahead of Stanmore Hawks at St George Stadium but they certainly went about it the hard way.

Stanmore, coming off their terrific Grand Final win in the First Division, gave Cosmos a real battle but in the end the experience of the Cosmos came to the fore.

David Milin scored the decisive goal in the second half after the Cosmos missed two first half penalty attempts, however, Cosmos have made a better start to the season than other NSW Ericsson Cup clubs.

Group B — SUPER SUB LAMOND

Manis Lamond was a 'Super Sub' for Marconi Fairfield as they came from behind to secure a 1-1 draw with Blacktown City Demons at Marconi Stadium.

The PNG international, playing in his first game for Marconi, came on to quickly cancel out Stuart Cleary's 55th minute opener for Blacktown.

In the other Group B match, Newcastle Breakers scraped together a 1-0 win over a depleted Canberra Olympic in Newcastle.

Clayton Zane scored the all important goal in the 74th minute which was enough to get them home against a Canberra side that had two players sent off on the night.

Clayton Zane: Newcastle's goalscorer.

WARATAH CUP MIDWEEK RESULTS

Marconi Fairfield 1
Lamond (62)
Blacktown City 1
Cleary (55)
Newcastle Breakers ..1
Zane (74)
Canberra Olympic.....0

NSW Soccer Federation WARATAH CUP

WEDNESDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER — ROUND 6 — Game 3

PLUIM PARK (CENTRAL COAST)

Sydney United vs Bonnyrigg White Eagles 6.30pm
Central Coast vs Hurstville City Minotaurs 8.15pm

MARCONI STADIUM

Blacktown City Demons vs. Canberra Olympic.....6.30pm
Marconi Fairfield vs Newcastle Breakers 8.15pm

ST. GEORGE STADIUM

Bankstown City Lions vs Mt. Pritchard.....6.30pm
UTS Olympic vs Stanmore Hawks 8.15pm

BRANDON PARK (Wollongong)

Canterbury Marrickville vs Canberra Cosmos 6.30pm
Wollongong City vs University of NSW 8.15pm

FRIDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER — Game 2

Marconi-Fairfield vs Canberra Olympic .....TBA

SUNDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER

Winner Group A vs Runner-Up Group C.....TBA .....TBA
Winner Group B vs Runner-Up Group D .....TBA .....TBA
Winner Group C vs Runner-Up Group A.....TBA .....TBA
Winner Group D vs Runner-Up Group B .....TBA .....TBA

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NSW Soccer Federation

NSW Waratah Cup MIDWEEK SPECIAL Cont...

Group C

DIMOSKI DENIES COASTIES

Wollongong City striker Sasha Dimoski scored the only goal of the game against Central Coast at Pluim Park, getting his side off to the perfect start in the Round Robin series.

Playing in what is regarded as the easiest group, Wollongong dismissed their main rival with a narrow but solid victory.

The Coasties, who just missed the top five in the Super League, put up a strong challenge on their home ground but lacked the necessary firepower up front, something which has dogged their season.

Twice in the first 10 minutes Peter Preston had good opportunities to put the Coasties in front but had both shots stopped.

Dimoski then made him pay, with his goal in the 20th minute after he pounced on a mix-up in the Coasties' defence to slot past David Fitzsimmons.

Anthony Surjan nearly put the Illawarra boys two up eight minutes later with a shot which sailed just past the post.

Central Coast kept fighting and Paul Roberts came the closest to an equaliser, sadly his shot hit the post.

Wolves could have secured the game late on but Dimoski was denied by a great save from Fitzsimmons, and later Scott Chipperfield shot over the bar.

Hurstville City Minotaurs, with a superb first half scored a comfortable 5-1 victory over University of NSW at Melita Stadium.

Minotaurs lead 4-0 at the break, with Louis Dounis notching a double and Stellios Sampsonis and Jason Wells getting one each.

When George Kalogeras added a fifth soon after the break it looked as though the floodgates might open but to Uni's credit they fought on hard and scored a deserved consolation goal to substitute Jim McKeever.

WARATAH CUP MIDWEEK RESULTS

Group C

Wollongong City.....1
Dimoski (20)
Central Coast.....0

H'tville City Mino 5
Dounis (15, 36), Sampsonis (21), Wells (39), Kalogeras (55) McKeever (66)
University of NSW 1

UTS OLYMPIC DOWNS CANBERRA IN CUP

By JOHN ECONOMOS

Carlos Gonzales, UTS Olympic's exciting 19 year old World Youth striker cum midfielder may have scored his last goal for his club last Sunday at the St George Stadium that helped his team defeat a willing but inexperienced Canberra Cosmos 2-1 in Round 6-Game 2 of the cash rich Waratah Cup.

The ball skilled Gonzales opened the score in the 26th minute when Canberra's left midfielder Ante Moric failed to close him down. From just inside the box Gonzales let fly with a lethal left footed blast that nailed the target giving Canberra's goalkeeper Tony Gianasca no chance.

It's expected that Gonzales today-(Tuesday)- flys out for a two week trial with England Premier League side Newcastle United-(see story page1.).

A far better organised uts Olympic than a midweek performance, knocked the ball around well but poor finishing denied them further goals.

Former World Youth central midfielder Peter Tsekenis doubled the scoreline in the 66th minute when a well measured Gonzales cross from the left to the first post was strongly headed in by Tsekenis

But a gallant and re organised Canberra refused to yield and bounced back seven minutes from the end with a goal from substitute Peter Buljan.

The tenacious Buljan was on the pitch only 15 minutes when he weaved his way past two back-pedalling, if not confused, Olympic defenders to hammer a low drive into the bottom left corner of the net.

Olympic's best were Gonzales, who was involved in both goals, rookie left back Hussein Jomaa and experienced international midfielder Tsekenis whilst Canberra's best were both flank defenders Dale Wingell and Paul Dee with good support from industrious midfielder Andy Ravanello.

Far from being displeased, Canberra coach Branko Culina later stated: "It's early days yet but although it was a rather scrappy game I was pleased with our performance as we've changed our style of play to push the ball around these days. We conceded the two goals through defensive errors by Ante Moric and our goalkeeper Tony Gianasca. Still we have Ivan Zelic and Tony Lemizina to come into the side which will make a difference "

Meanwhile a reserved UTS Olympic coach Geoff Harcombe, elected to say: "We should have knocked in more goals but at least it was a 50% better performance than last Wednesday's against Canterbury. Our little 18 year old left back Hussein Jomaa who made his first appearance with us, I felt did really O.K. as did Peter Tsekenis who took his goal well. These days Peter likes to get forward which is the kind of game I want from him and that pleases me."

UTS OLYMPIC: Bouhoutsos: Baillie, Sorras, Juric, Jomaa: Emerton, Ardone, Tsekenis, Kalantzis (Taliadoros 46): Poimer (Carle 75), Gonzales.

CANBERRA COSMOS: Gianaska: Wingell, Roberts, Popovich, Dee: Ravanello, Kelly (Milin 72), Morino, Moric (Prenzoski 68): James (Buljan 68), Musitano.

Scorers: Sydney OLYMPIC: Gonzales (26) Tsekenis (66) Canberra: Buljan (83)

Referee: S.Micallef.

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE FINALS SERIES

PRELIMINARY FINAL

	G/13	G/14	G/15	G/16
G'sville H'sby v Sydney Olympic	1-2	-	-	-
G'sville Hornsby v Parra Eagles	-	2-1	-	-
Sthern Districts v Sydney Olympic	-	-	1-0	-
G'sville H'sby v Sydney Olympic	-	-	-	1-0

DIVISION ONE FINALS SERIES

	G/13	G/14	G/15	G/16
Bl'town Assoc v St George	2-3	-	-	-
St George v Leichhardt Tigers	-	0-4	-	-
B'kstown Assoc v Penrith Panthers	-	-	3-4	(aet)
Leichhardt Tigers v CSI Schofields	-	-	-	4-1

DIVISION TWO FINALS SERIES GRAND FINAL

	G/13	G/14	G/15	G/16
Cant Assoc v Ryde City	1-2	-	-	-
Stanmore Hawks v Ryde City	-	0-2	-	-
Hills United v Ryde City	-	-	0-0 (5-4 pens)	

DIVISION THREE FINALS SERIES GRAND FINAL

	1st	2nd
Arncliffe Scots v Glebe Wanderers	1-1	-
	2-1	AET
Glebe Wanderers v Trasandinos	-	1-1
		2-1 AET

DIVISION FOUR FINALS SERIES MAJOR SEMI FINAL

	1st	2nd
Maroubra United v Sydney University	1-3	-
CSI Schofield v Maroubra United	-	1-1 5-4 pens

MINOR SEMI FINAL

	1st	2nd
Fraser Park v CSI Schofield	3-5	-
Sydney University v Fraser Park	-	2-4

DIVISION FIVE FINALS SERIES MINOR SEMI FINAL

	1st	2nd
Nepean District v Bossy	1-2	-
Camden Tigers v Auburn Star	-	2-1

1997 WARATAH CUP

GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bankstown City	2	1	1	0	4	3	4
Bonnyrigg WE	2	1	1	0	6	3	4
Sydney United	2	1	0	1	8	3	3
Mt Pritchard	2	0	0	2	2	11	0

GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Newcastle Breakers	2	2	0	0	6	0	6
Marconi Fairfield	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Blacktown City	2	0	1	1	1	6	1
Canberra Olympic	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wollongong City	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
Central Coast	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
Hurstville City Minotaur	2	1	0	1	6	4	3
University of NSW	2	0	0	1	1	7	0

GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Canterbury Marrickville	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Canberra Cosmos	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
UTS Olympic	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
Stanmore Hawks	2	0	1	1	1	2	1

WARATAH CUP — Round 6 WEEKEND REPORTS

GROUP A: A second half hat-trick by Tony Krslovic steered defending champions Sydney United to a morale boosting 7-1 victory over Mt Pritchard.

After a surprising loss to Bankstown in Game One United needed a big victory, which they accomplished, but now they must beat arch-rivals Bonnyrigg White Eagles in Game three next Wednesday to get through.

United took an early 11th minute lead through Marconi loan signing Nick Bosevski, and maintained the pressure but with no luck on the scoreboard.

Nick Bosevski: Scored for 'loan' club.

But in the 36th minute, the Mounties couldn't keep out the energetic Abbas Saad and he netted his second goal for the club since coming across from UTS Olympic.

The second half, however, was a one team show as the more experienced and composed United asserted their authority with Krslovic coming to the fore.

He scored his first six minutes in and when Steve Refenes netted minutes later, United's confidence lifted.

Krslovic with another was quickly followed by a goal to Mt Pritchard's Joe Bruni.

With the game over coach David Mitchell brought himself on, and within two minutes scored his side's sixth, and right on full time Krslovic converted from the spot for his hat-trick.

Bankstown twice came from behind to grab a share of the points with Bonnyrigg White Eagles at the Serbian Centre.

An own goal after only five minutes gave Bonnyrigg a surprise lead. Busy midfielder Robert Gomez soon had Bankstown back on level terms, but when Johnny Ghisso scored in the 30th minute the Eagles were looking good to secure a quarter final spot.

However, like they did against United in Game One, Bankstown battled away and equalised again through Mile Todoroski.

Both sides tried desperately in the final 20 minutes to secure a Quarter Final berth but had to settle for a point each.

GROUP B: Newcastle Breakers secured a Quarter Final berth with a 5-0 win over Blacktown City Demons at the Gabbie Stadium.

After impressing in their draw with Marconi on Wednesday (and Newcastle struggling to Canberra Olympic), Blacktown would have been confident of a good result.

But first half goals to Ian Tresidder and Jason Bennett put Newcastle firmly in control as the Demons turned in a shocking display, virtually ending their campaign.

Newcastle scored in the second half with Liam McGuire, Todd McManus and Doug West all getting on the sheet.

The other Game Two match in Group B was postponed due to Canberra Olympic playing in their ACTSF Grand Final: which they duly won.

GROUP C: Wollongong City secured a place in the Quarter Finals with an emphatic 3-1 victory over an outclassed but gallant Hurstville City Minotaurs.

Two goals to reliable striker, Saso Dimoski, and one to Matthew Horsley always had Wollongong in command of the match.

They now have six points and with a game to play against bottom side University of NSW, should finish on top of that group.

Hurstville, who still have a good chance of qualifying, kept the Wolves honest and scored a valuable goal through George Kalogeras with twenty to go.

Central Coast missed a golden opportunity to get a good goal difference, beating University of NSW by just 2-0.

The Coasties were expected to win comfortably but were surprisingly held to 0-0 at the break. Coasties' captain, Mark Drysdale, showed his forwards how to score with the opening goal while Nathan Byrn added a second just on full time.

GROUP D: In the earlier game, Stanmore Hawks came back strong in the second half to force a 1-1 draw with Canterbury Marrickville.

Matthew Shepherd gave Canterbury a first half lead, scrambling a shot in off the post in the 30th minute.

But Stanmore were not about to let the match slip away and three minutes into the second half Eddie Briscoe rose to meet a cross from the right to head home from close range.

Stanmore, with much of the play in the second half, kept the pressure on but could not find the elusive winner.

GAME 3: SUMMARY

GROUP A: For last year's defending champions, Sydney United, they have to win to get through to the quarters. To do this, they must beat Bonnyrigg, who themselves only need to draw, and are in form and have the players to beat United, who still are trying to get some shape to their game.

Bankstown are in the box seat for a Quarter Finals spot with a game against bottom placed side Mt Pritchard, who are on four points and a win will ensure they at least will finish second.

GROUP B:

Newcastle have ensured their position in the quarters with their 5-0 thrashing of Blacktown. They face Marconi who will still have Game Two against Canberra Olympic to play on the Friday, which they should win to ensure their place.

Blacktown's loss has made it awfully hard for them, especially if goal difference comes into it, while Olympic had their moment of glory winning their local Grand Final.

GROUP C:

The Central Coast v Hurstville City match will determine who goes through with Wollongong City to the next round.

Hurstville only needs a draw to progress on goal difference while the Coasties must win to stay alive. With home ground advantage on the Central Coast they should win, but with their strikers struggling up front, Hurstville must be confident they can progress.

Wollongong will finish top after disposing of University of NSW, who have found it tough against sides with much more class and experience.

GROUP D:

Any team still has a chance, however UTS Olympic must be favoured to go through with a game against Stanmore. This is not to detract from the Hawks who have played with plenty of passion and fight. But they are not in the same class as UTS.

The Canterbury and Canberra clash down in Wollongong is the crunch game. Canterbury were brought back to earth by Stanmore and one gets the feeling that all their energies were directed towards UTS. Canberra showed some good signs against Olympic and should get the points.

Rising Stars

Victorian Heydays ...

By MICKY BROCK

In the recent Australian Secondary Schools Soccer Championships, state representatives for Victoria have every reason to be pleased with themselves after pocketing many of the awards on offer:

1. They beat NSW for the first time as they won five and drew one match to finish the tournament undefeated.

2. During their six matches they conceded only four goals, thanks to some excellent performances by goalkeeper Tony Cizmadija (see last week's edition for a story on this promising keeper).

3. Seven of the Victorian side were selected for the Australian squad: Tony Cizmadija, Alex Josifovski, Peter Grguric, Pece Siveski, Enzo De Santis, Serdar Pir and Cameron Pino.

4. Victorian goal keeper, Tony Cizmadija, was also named, "Player of the Tournament".

His choice was only the second occasion that a custodian had won the Award in the history of the Championships, and the first time in ten years that a player from Victoria had topped the poll.

Our congratulations go to all who took part but especially to the Victorians on such an outstanding performance.

Victorian S.S.S. Champions: Back (L-R) Lou Temelkovski (Man), Tony Cizmadija, Nick Schwall, Ivan Perkov, Alex Josifovski, Ivan Razov, Peter Grguric, Tory De Petro, Steve Vugdelija, Daniel Petrongolo, Jim Gleeson (Coach). Front (L-R) Enzo De Santis, Pece Siveski, Robert Ardesi, Serdar Pir, Len Catalano, Lirim Salievski, Cameron Pino.

COMMONWEALTH BANK SOCCER CUP

CHS KNOCKOUT SEMI FINAL

MATCHES AT SEYMOUR SHAW OVAL

COMMONWEALTH BANK CUP

Westfields.....3 Orange.....1
(Attard, Arrarte, Eleun) *(Wallace)*

Lambton.....2 Keira.....1
(Wheeler, Tanchoski) *(Zellis)*

COMMONWEALTH BANK SHIELD

Westfields.....6 Port Hacking.....1
(Iacino 2, Golblowski 2, Kimber, Garriock) *(Henrys)*

Vincentia.....3 Swansea.....0
(McLeod 2, Hewson)

CHS KNOCKOUT FINALS

MATCHES AT MARCONI

COMMONWEALTH BANK CUP

Westfields.....2 Lambton.....1
(Attard, Cavallaro) *(Tancheski)*

COMMONWEALTH BANK SHIELD

Westfields.....4 Vincentia.....1
(Garriock, Iacono, Scandurra, Hewes) *(Hewson)*

WESTERN AUSTRALIA RD 24

PREMIER LEAGUE

Floreat Athena	1	Fremantle City	5
Swan IC	3	Western Knights	1
Dianella White Eagles	0	Olympic Kingsway	1
Inglewood Falcons	3	Sorrento	0
Joondalup City	0	Perth	0

FIRST DIVISION

Stirling Suns	0	Rockingham City	1
Queens Park	2	Ashfield Bunbury	3
North Lake	3	Bassendeon Caledonian	3
Perth City	0	Cockburn United	3
Wanneroo City	3	Armadale	4
Leeming Strikers	0	Southside United	1
Balcatta	2	University	0

TOPPER BILL TURNER CUP | TOPPER BILL TURNER CUP | TOPPER BILL TURNER CUP

Reports ...

Prior to kick off in the NNSW Far North Coast Area 5C Final of the Topper Bill Turner Cup: From left; Gary Armor, Coach of Kadina High School, David Russell, Coach of Kingscliff High, Bill Turner and Colin Blake, Richmond River High and Area Manager 5C.

Kadima defeated Kingscliff in an entertaining decider and then went on to defeat Kempsey Duval Armidale, the Broadmeadow School, before losing to competition favourites, Westfields Sports High, on a penalty shootout.

L-R: Gary Armor, Bill Turner, David Russell, Colin Blake.

Maitland Grossman High School Team

◆◆◆◆◆

MAITLAND GROSSMANN High School 1997 Topper Bill Turner Cup squad who won the Upper Hunter/Coalfields Area 6B Final after defeating Mt View, Cessnock 2-0. Later they lost to The Broadmeadow School.

◆◆◆◆◆

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— By GRAHAM COOKE

higher standards IN THE ACT

The standard of young players coming out of Canberra Soccer's junior ranks is higher now than it was nine years ago, former senior league chairman and ACT Soccer Federation Vice President Jo Alberto says.

Alberto, who now runs an international business consultancy with branches in Sydney, Hong Kong and Xian, Western China, was on a rare visit back to Canberra.

He was a well known figure on the local Soccer scene for the decade before 1988, having formed the Luso club which won the ACT premiership in the early 1980s.

After watching a preliminary final in the under/19 division, won by Canberra Deakin on penalty kicks over Weston Creek after the teams had shared an eight-goal thriller, Alberto said the game at this level was faster and more skilful than he remembered.

"The supporters also seem to be less confrontational towards each other," he said. "That is all very positive for the game."

Alberto is no strange to confrontation in Soccer, having been faced with the unenviable task of trying to ensure Canberra, just 18 months after it had lost its NSL place, retained a foothold in the NSW League.

The then Canberra City Griffins was bankrupt, but its owner, the Downer Olympic Club was reluctant to sell to potential buyer Canberra Croatia at a figure Croatia would accept.

As the two sides wrangled, Alberto sought to broker a deal, laying the foundations on which ACTSF president Charlie Perkins was eventually able to build.

Looking back, he can afford to be philosophical. "In Soccer at that time it was always difficult to pick who would be in or out," he said. "It brought about a lot of conflict.

"Now there seems to be a consensus for adopting a positive approach for the good of the game — that was not always the case."

The issue in Chinese Soccer is sponsorship, with tobacco companies allowed to promote their products through the game. "Every third cigarette smoked in the world today is smoked by a Chinese," he said.

"I suppose that eventually even China will ban tobacco sponsorship but in the meantime the code is benefitting from a huge influx of dollars.

"Let's face it, Australia Soccer made a great deal of progress for many years with the help of tobacco money."

Asked about the Luso club, he said: "It was an accident ... a group of friends who came together because they loved Soccer, and in one season, when several of the top ACT clubs had gone to the NSW competition, managed to win a premiership.

"But it had no structure, and eventually it just faded away. In many ways it was the last of the old-style clubs to meet with any success."

Alberto said he remained passionate about the game "and it is my hope that I will be able to promote more links between Australia and China which will be of benefit to both countries".

PLEASE EXPLAIN

Canberra Deakin's Stan Dukic was at the centre of a storm as his team prepared for the ACT Premier League Grand Final last week.

Senior League chairman Joe Fusca said the veteran midfielder may be summonsed before the league's management committee to explain comments he made to Australian &British Soccer Weekly.

Speaking after his team's 3-2 Preliminary Final win over Belconnen United, Dukic said he was representing players from both teams when he described the standard of pitches provided for the finals series as "disgusting".

"We had to play one of the most important games of the season on a pitch which had combination goal-posts, and sub-standard facilities for spectators," he said.

He also claimed local Soccer was being seen as an inconvenience, with everything being channelled towards the Canberra Cosmos in the Ericsson Cup.

That drew an angry response from Cosmos chairman Paul Murphy, who said his club could hardly be held responsible for the state of grounds in the ACT.

"We have suffered as much as anyone," he said. "Because of the unavailability of grounds, we have been forced to play all our Waratah Cup matches away from home.

"The problem lies with the ACT Government who maintains the ovals, not with the Cosmos."

Fusca said Dukic should check his facts before rushing to newspapers.

"We have been trying for weeks to get suitable grounds," he said. "The Bruce Athletics Field is being prepared for the Australian Masters Games, Bruce Stadium is out because the Canberra Raiders are playing there the following night and Seiffert Oval is having work done on it.

"The pitch at Greenway (where last year's Grand Final was played) is in such a shocking state we did not even consider it."

He said he would be writing to Dukic, "and we may ask him to come in and explain his actions".

Support for Dukic came from a Grand Final opponent, Olympic's Andrew Young.

"There aren't many at our club who were happy when we knew the Grand Final was at Wanniassa Oval," he said. "I believe Stan is voicing a legitimate complaint."

JASON DUNN: MAY NOT PLAY FOR CANBERRA

JASON DUNN may not, after all, be seen in Canberra Cosmos colours this season.

The Belconnen United defender last played in the Ericsson Cup in the 1995-96 season. Last year he was inexplicably passed over by coach Mike Lyons, and the Cosmos defence leaked goals as a result.

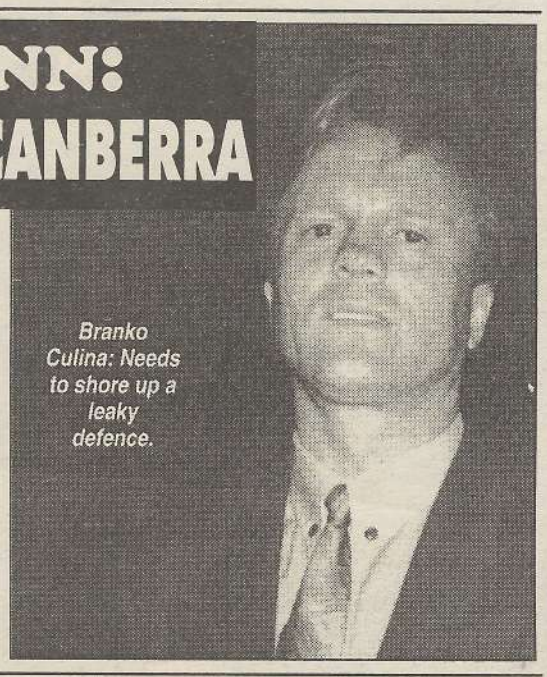
He had been widely tipped to make a come-back under Branko Culina, but Dunn said he could not meet the new team boss' insistence the squad be fully professional.

"I have a very good job, and it would be foolish of me to give it up at this late stage of my Soccer career," he said.

"Branko wants me to train during the day — I can't do it — and that's where the matter rests at the moment.

"The coach has said he will get back to me if the situation changes, but at the moment he feels he can't make an exception.

"I accept that, and if the worst comes to the worst, I'll simply have a holiday from Soccer this summer."



Branko Culina: Needs to shore up a leaky defence.

SUNS BURNT IN ACT

By NICK GUOTH

Burns Club pulled off the upset of ACT Soccer's Finals day by winning the Novell State League Division One Grand Final 2-1 over Capital City Suns.

Burns, which finished fourth during the season, started the game much harder than its more-fancied opponent and were rewarded after only four minutes when a Scott Summers free kick was deflected in by Suns defender Sasha Taseski.

The Suns' chances of getting back into the game were dealt a severe blow just before the break when goalkeeper Victor Gouzvarov was sent off after a tackle on Andrew Wallace.

A few minutes later Burns took advantage of this, when another free kick this time by Wallace, flew past the reserve keeper and into the far corner of the goal.

Both teams settled down in the second half with the Suns generating a number of chances and having more of the play. A few minutes into stoppage time they finally found the back of the net, with Taseski heading in a corner.

It was too late for the Suns and their hopes of a Major-Minor Premiership double disappeared with the final whistle.

NOVELL ACT PREMIER LEAGUE

GRAND FINAL			
Olympic	4	Canberra Deakin	0
RESERVE GRAND FINAL			
Belconnen United	2	Weston Creek	1
YOUTH GRAND FINAL			
Gungahlin Juventus	2	Canberra Deakin	0 (aet)
STATE LEAGUE DIVISION 1			
GRAND FINAL			
Burns Club	2	Capital City Suns	1
Reserves Grand Final			
ANU	2	Belconnen United	1
YOUTH GRAND FINAL			
Belconnen United	3	Belwest-Olympic	2 (aet)
STATE LEAGUE DIVISION 2			
GRAND FINAL			
ANU A	1	ANU B	0
Division 3 Grand Final			
Gungahlin Juventus	1	Belconnen United	0
STATE LEAGUE DIVISION 4			
GRAND FINAL			
Defence Academy	2	Monaro	1
Masters Grand Final			
Canberra Deakin	2	Kambah Colts	0

ZELIC TO CANBERRA

Novell Canberra Cosmos have scored a major coup with the signing of Ivan Zelic, captain of the Australian Olympic team.

Sweeper Zelic has been signed from Ericsson Cup club UTS Olympic, where he has played for the last two seasons after completing a scholarship at the Australian Institute of Sport.

"It's a good signing for the club," said Cosmos coach Branko Culina. "Ivan gives us more options and he is a very talented player with a big future in the game.

Zelic viewed the signing in these terms: "My main target is to captain the Olyroos in the 2000 Olympics, as well as play well for the Novell Canberra Cosmos."

"Like most players the thought of playing as a full time professional overseas is an appealing one, but I've got some major targets ahead of me in Australia.

"I'll concentrate on them first."

CANBERRA OLYMPIC EASE PAST DEAKIN

Playing Newcastle Topper Breakers in mid-week was just the kind of preparation for the ACT Novell Premier League Grand Final, Olympic player-coach Ray Junna said after his team had beaten Canberra Deakin 4-0 on Sunday.

"Coming up against an Ericsson Cup club forced us to lift our work rate and improve our sharpness, and that carried on into this afternoon's game," he said.

It would be hard to argue with him. Despite losing 1-0 to the Breakers, Olympic were a class above its Premier League opponent, giving one of its best displays in recent seasons.

Deakin, on the other hand, looked jaded. They had battled through two tough rounds — including an upset 3-2 win over Minor Premier Belconnen United this week before — and the feeling around the ground was that this was one "Grand Final" too many.

The result provided the perfect finale for retiring Olympic veteran Baz Giampaolo in his 24th season of senior Soccer. The former Socceroo and National League regular responded with an inspired performance, and received an ovation from all supporters when he left the field with 12 minutes left.

Just three minutes had gone when he struck, taking advantage of a smidgen of space in the Deakin defence to turn and volley past goalkeeper Miljenko Rogic.

Deakin had a couple of opportunities to get back into the game, and had Anthony Barac taken his chances, the story might have unfolded differently. As it was two further blows as half time approached killed off any chance of a comeback.

First Gabbi Exposito, one of the rising stars in the Olympic line-up, took advantage of a disorganised defence to make it 2-0, then in first-half stoppage time, Njegosh Popovich headed home.

Giampaolo treated the crowd at Wanniassa Oval to one last piece of magic. Receiving a pass from Steve Vanzetti he made space, and struck a fierce drive against the crossbar. Popovich, following up well, had no trouble putting the rebound away.

RAY JUNNA

Exposito almost had a fifth a minute later, but by now Deakin was a beaten side.

Deakin coach John Bull said his team had played only two really bad games all season. "The first was against Weston Creek, and we wait for the Grand Final for the second," he said. "There are no excuses. We were outplayed today."

For Junna it was a case of "everyone doing their jobs".

"When that happens the rest is easy," he said. "Despite Belconnen United winning the minor premiership, I always maintained that when we play to our potential we are the best team in the competition, and I think we have proved that point over the finals series."

Giampaolo, who claimed the man-of-the-match award, said that although he would desperately miss playing "I believe I am smart enough to know when the time is right."

"It is getting harder and harder to maintain that competitive edge," he said.

Football has not seen the last of him. There remains at least two Waratah Cup games and then the masters division awaits. "I've certainly got to do something to keep fit," he said.

Footnote for the future: Giampaolo's son, Domenic (8), was one of the stars of a roo-ball exhibition played earlier in the afternoon.

Olympic: Jones, Zwangobani, Vanzetti, Polywater, Young, Mazis, Exposito (Cattanach 72), Junna, Popovich, Fernandez, Giampaolo (Arvanitis 78).

Canberra Deakin: Miljenko Rogic, Douglas, R Milin, Mladin Rogic, Fabrizio, Dukic, Gadzic, Da Silva (Djkic 73), Skrtic (T Milin 52), A Barac, M Barac.

Referee: Chris Conti.
Yellow cards: Nil.
Red cards: Nil.
Crowd: 2000.

Parramatta Eagles NSW GRA

AND FINAL WINNERS

Victorian Soccer Federation

ALTONA MAGIC 4
BULLEEN INTER KINGS 2 (AET)

By Dwyght Tuffnell

Altona Magic made it a hat trick of championships with a 4-2 extra time win against Bulleen Inter Kings at Lakeside Stadium on Sunday.

In 1995 they defeated Bulleen, last year they beat Heidelberg United and this year they completed the treble with two goals in extra time.

Altona were always favourites to win against a Bulleen side that did remarkably well to reach the final after finishing in fifth spot.

Coach Ian Dobson, who had already guided Altona and Melbourne Knights (Ericsson Cup) to previous Grand Finals, made it three wins from three attempts.

"I thought it was a great game, obviously it got a bit scrappy towards the end but I think on chances, we had the better of the game," Dobson said.

Nick Georgopoulos came very close to scoring a stunning goal early when he hit the post from 35 metres, but it was the Kings who took the lead with a goal out of nothing.

Eric Hollingsworth fed the ball to Damon Collina, whose shot seemed to be comfortably saved by Darren McGrath, until the ball unexpectedly rolled through his grip and into the back of the net.

Altona's response was immediate and it took another goalkeeping error to get them back in the game.

Sean Keogh had already been tested from long distance and Savva Rusmir's long range shot was too hot to handle for him — he dropped the ball — and Simon Micevski was there quickly and made him pay for his untypical error.

The woodwork denied the Magic again soon after. Ice Kutlesovski had done extremely well to get past two defenders and beat Keogh with his shot, only to see it bounce back off a post.

Sash Becvinovski also had a chance that he would have usually done better with, but he made up for it in the 53rd minute, when he was in the right place to knock in Savva Rusmir's far post cross to give Altona the lead.

Just when it looked like the Magic may run away with it Bulleen were level — thanks to another goal from Collina. Robert Stojcevski swung over a high cross and there he was with a stunning header.

The game went into extra time and Altona got the all important goal just two minutes into the first period.

Makeshift defender Gerry McAleer was unfortunate to knock in Zdravko Atanasovski's cross aimed at Becvinovski.

Bulleen pressed and pressed but the Magic defence of Tom Markovski, Dean Fak and Robert Runje were simply too strong, however, they nearly did five minutes from the end when referee Gerry Connolly spotted a foul on Hollingsworth close to the penalty area.

Nevertheless, Becvinovski wrapped it up in the 110th minute with a clinical finish with just Keogh to beat after almost every Bulleen player had pushed forward looking for the equaliser.

"I thought the three players in midfield, Simon Micevski, Savva Rusmir and Nick Georgopoulos were all outstanding," said Dobson.

"We struggled at the back, where we have been strong this season but at the end of the day, after having the best of the chances, it could have gone either way.

"But I'm very happy. I've had three grand finals in three years and I'm very lucky to have won them."

Bulleen coach, Bogdan Bonk, wouldn't say that Altona were the better side but said his opponents had players that dominated for long periods of the game.

"We took the lead and then conceded a stupid goal. It took about ten minutes to get back into the game after that" he said.

Bonk felt he had done a good job since taking over from Michael Urukalo, but said it was up to the club whether or not he would coach next year.

Rusmir was awarded the Jimmy Rooney Medal for being the best player on the ground.

In next week's ABSW you can see all the Grand Final action in a special souvenir double page spread.

Magic: McGrath, Atanasovski, Fak, Runje, Micevski, Markovski, Rusmir, Georgopoulos, Becvinovski, Kutlesovski (Petrevski 90), Jolevski (Cvetkovski 68).

Kings: Keogh, Valentic (Mazzini 75), Stojcevski, Tsiakos, McAleer, Tartaglia, Bresciano, Collina, Grbac, Liparoti, Hollingsworth, Guglielmi (Ngata 100).

SCORERS:
ALTONA: Micevski (24), Becvinovski (53, 110), McAleer (og 92).
BULLEEN: Collina (19, 59).

YELLOW CARDS:
BULLEEN: Tartaglia (57)

Referee: G.Connolly
Crowd: 4,000

Dean Fak (pictured right): 7 out of 10 on the day for Altona.

PLAYER RATINGS

By JOHN RIGAS

ALTONA MAGIC

Darren McGrath (6) — Not one of his best games. Was under pressure at crosses and conceded a very soft goal when he let ball slip through his hands.

Zdravko Atanasovski (6) — Was dangerous when attacking but got caught in possession at critical times. Provided the cross for Becvinovski's winner.

Dean Fak (7) — Started off marking Collina but then had to be switched to the dangerous Hollingsworth. Kept him reasonably quiet for the remainder of the game.

Robert Runje (6) — Last man in defence who controlled proceedings without to much hassle. Usual solid game.

Simon Micevski (8) — Critical part of an almost dominant Altona midfield. Scored Magic's first goal.

Tom Markovski (7) — Had trouble with Hollingsworth early before being given the task on Collina. Read the game well and was a rock when Bulleen searched for their extra time equaliser.

Savva Rusmir (9) — Best man on the park who worried the Kings with pace and excellent distribution.

Nick Georgopoulos (8) — Another whose passing was near faultless. Had shot early on from 35 metres that hit post.

Ice Kutlesovski (6) — Kept pretty quiet for most of the match and should have done better with first half chance that hit the post.

Sash Becvinovski (7) — Found it difficult to shake his marker for most of the day. Showed his class with the two typical Becvinovski goals.

George Jolevski (6) — Was good in the challenge but this was far from his best game of the season. Replaced by Cvetkovski with 20 minutes to go.

Zoran Cvetkovski (6) — Came on for Jolevski and was very steady in defence/midfield.

Zoran Petrevski (3) — Came on at the start of extra time for Kutlesovski but didn't do an awful lot.

INTER KINGS

Sean Keogh (6) — Perhaps to blame for first goal when he dropped Rusmir shot? Couldn't be faulted for other three goals.

Frank Valentic (6) — Worried by Rusmir's pace but his tackling was very sound. Replaced by Mazzini after 75 minutes.

Robert Stojcevski (6) — Wasn't in the game much but he did provide the cross for Bulleen's second goal.

Bill Tsiakos (7) — One of his side's best. Solid at the back and did quite well on the dangerous Becvinovski.

Dean Tartaglia (6) — Was steady without being brilliant. Only player to be booked for the day.

Gerry McAleer (6) — Striker who was playing at stopper. Looked in real trouble early before finding his feet. Was unfortunate to score own goal in extra time.

Mark Bresciano (6) — Battled hard but found it hard to come to grips with Altona's dominant mid-fielders.

Damon Collina (7) — Was perhaps too lucky to score the first goal but his second, from a terrific header, kept his team in the game.

Anthony Grbac (6) — Didn't create as much as he usually does. Another one who found it hard battling with Micevski, Georgopoulos and Rusmir in midfield.

Eric Hollingsworth (7) — Was very sharp early when he saw off Markovski. Fak kept him a little quieter but was still a threat whenever he got the ball.

Damian Guglielmi (6) — Rarely sighted in midfield and made little contribution.

Michael Mazzini (5) — Came on for Valentic and put in a very brave performance with several surging runs.

Harry Ngata (3) — Replaced Guglielmi in extra time, not enough time to make an impact.

Comment by Dwyght Tuffnell

In the Victorian Premier League the standard has been on a steady decline for a number of years. This may be traced to when automatic promotion to the national league could no longer be guaranteed. Thus, most clubs cannot go any higher, they can only go down.

Unless they are ambitious, or have huge finances, clubs have nothing to aim for: there is no incentive.

This generates a lack of professionalism among the clubs; to the stage where it appears they are no longer interested.

Heidelberg United, for example, have finished probably their worst season ever — seemingly not bothered about making an effort at all. This once great club has realised that it will never get into the national league again, even if it does join forces with an AFL club. That is the reality that most clubs with an ambition to play with the elite face.

For better or worse, clubs backed by ethnic communities have the slimmest of chances to be elected to the Ericsson Cup, now that the likes of Perth Glory and Brisbane Strikers have shown Australian soccer the way forward.

Despite the closeness at the top of the premier league, the standard was at its lowest ever. Results resembling cricket scores were not uncommon, and while it may have provided reasonably good entertainment, the football left much to be desired.

It reached farcical proportions in the last two rounds when North Geelong Warriors conceded ten goals against Bentleigh Greens. Then the following week, Altona Magic stuck eleven past them (without reply).

This wasn't helped much by the fact that the Warriors, already relegated, sent out sides filled mostly with reserve team players.

Whipping boys of the competition, Melton Reds, were not much better; in fact they were a good deal worse.

Some players walked out before the start of the season over a pay dispute —unless they saw the writing on the wall — and the Reds never recovered from that moment on.

They broke a lot of records this season, sadly for the wrong reasons! Melton conceded the most goals ever — 98 — and used the most players; over 40.

Apparently it was all down to the coach. The Reds went through five of them this year (yet another record).

Furthermore, the quality of some of the players is another reason for the drop in standard. Players in the Premier League can be split up into many groups, but the majority of them are in these three groups.

1. Players who have played Ericsson Cup and are now in the veteran class.

2. Players who are good players, but just not up to playing in the Ericsson Cup.

3. Young players, the only ones who can go higher.

Players in the first group are usually recycled around clubs, and this is okay but it is taking the place of a younger player who may benefit from playing at this level.

Of the young players in the Premier League, very few get picked up by a club, and even less actually play. All the best young players are either at the VIS, AIS or in a national league club's youth team squad.

Victorian Soccer Federation

MELBOURNE NEWS

Altona Magic's George Jolevski is this year's winner of the Gold Medal, voted by the referees, for the best player in the Victorian Premier League.

He beat favourite Nick Van Egmond of Bentleigh Greens by five votes, however the talented Greens' player won the Pascoe Vale Sportscene/ABSW Player of the Year, and took the Bill Fleming Medal for the best player as voted by the media.

Jolevski started the season with Thomastown Zebras but switched to Magic half way through the season, continuing his terrific form that culminated in a successful Grand Final appearance.

Gold Medal Vote Leaders: 33 - Jolevski (Altona Magic), 28- Van Egmond (Bentleigh Greens), 21 - George Svigos (Heidelberg United), 19 - Sash Markovski (Sunshine Georgies), 17 - John Waddell (Green Gully Cavaliers), Ike Alagiozidis (Bentleigh Greens), Nick Tsaltas (Port Melbourne Sharks).

Award Winners: Gold Medal ; George Jolevski (Altona Magic), Bill Fleming Medal ; Nick Van Egmond (Bentleigh Greens), Under 21 Player of the year ; Sash Markovski (Sunshine Georgies), Top Scorer ; Sash Markovski (Sunshine Georgies), Goalkeeper of the year ; Darren McGrath (Altona Magic), Coach of the Year ; Harry Chalkitis (Bentleigh Greens), Victorian Women's Soccer Association Player of the year ; Lisa Davis (Westvale), Referee of the year ; Jeremy Blaney.

• Gippsland Falcons coach Frank Arok was in Sydney recently to take in the NSW Super League Grand Final between Parramatta Eagles and Bonnyrigg White Eagles.

He had an eye on two players he is hoping to sign: Bonnyrigg's skilful pocket dynamo John Ghisso, and talented Milan Gajic.

The Falcons have been pretty quiet in the off season, only playing local friendlies against Morwell Pegasus and Newborough/Yallourn, as well as taking on Altona Magic.

Nevertheless, Anthony Cassar from Sunshine Georgies and Port Melbourne Sharks' duo, Nick Tsaltas and Roddy Vargas, have impressed in these games.

• Melbourne Knights General Manager, David Filipovic, has resigned from his post because of business commitments. His position will be taken over by marketing manager Sebastian Italia; effective September 15.

Meanwhile classy Knights defender, David Cervinski, is rumoured to be leaving the club, and new boys Carlton are among the interested parties. However, the Somers Street club will welcome back striker Ivan Kelic from South Melbourne.

• South Melbourne's good pre-season form has been soured with the news that Jason Polak is out with a long term injury.

He damaged a shoulder and knee in the game against Carlton. Meanwhile, new signing from Greek club PAOK, John Anastasiadis, has also been sidelined with a leg injury — fortunately it is not as serious as Polak's and Lakeside's new boy is expected to make a comeback soon.

South's other new players, Goran Lozanovski and Con Boutsianis, have been impressive in wins over Carlton, Stonnington City, Yarraville/Glen Eira and Westvale.

"Healthy Diet — Try It" PREMIER LEAGUE

Con Boutsianis: Impressive pre-season games over Yarraville, Westvale and Stonnington City.

STATE /PROVISIONAL LEAGUE

Fixtures for 13-14 SEPTEMBER

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION 1
No games scheduled this week

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION 2
No games scheduled this week

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION 3
No games scheduled this week

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION 4
No games scheduled this week

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIVISION 1
No games scheduled this week

DIVISION 2 — RD 21
Saturday September 13

Brunswick City v Hoppers Crossing
Braeside United v South Yarra
Berwick City v Meadow Park
Riversdale v Sydenham Park
Waverley Wanderers v Templestowe Eagles
Keon Park - bye

DIVISION 3 — Metro
Saturday September 13

Dandenong v Newborough/Yallourn
Monash University v Melbourne University
Uni. of Melb. Blues v Camberwell Grammar
Morwell Pegasus v Ashburton
Ringwood Rovers v Elwood City
Keilor United - bye

DIVISION 3 — Nth/West
Sunday September 14

North Glenroy v North Reservoir
Mill Park v Northern United
Latrobe University v Somerton City
Watsonia Heights v West Preston
Broadmeadows United v Whittlesea United
Darebin United v Brimbank

DIVISION 3 — Sth/East
Sunday September 14

Flemington Falcons v Ivanhoe United
Endeavour Hills v Noble Park
East Kew v Thornbury United
Monash City v Parkmore
Dingley City - bye
Collingwood City - bye

"Healthy Diet — Try It" PREMIER LEAGUE RESULTS

Altona Magic 4 – Bulleen Inter Kings 2 (AET)

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Around the Globe

French First Division Results

Strasbourg	0	Paris St Germain	3
Rennes	2	Metz	2
Cannes	1	Monaco	2
Bastia	4	Bordeaux	1
Lens	0	Nantes	0
Auxerre	5	Chateauroux	0
Montpellier	2	Guingamp	3
Le Havre	1	Toulouse	1
Marseille	1	Lyon	0

WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

Europe — Group One

Croatia	3	Bosnia-Herz	2
Slovenia	0	Greece	3

Group Three

Azerbaijan	0	Norway	1
Switzerland	1	Finland	2

Group Four

Austria	1	Sweden	0
Latvia	1	Estonia	0

Group Six

Faeroe Islands	0	Czech Republic	2

Group Seven

Netherlands	3	Belgium	1

Group Eight

Iceland	2	Ireland	4
Liechtenstein	1	Romania	8
Lithuania	2	Macedonia	0

Group Nine

Armenia	3	Albania	0
Germany	1	Portugal	1

Asia Second Round Group B

South Korea	3	Kazakhstan	0

South Asian Championship

Sri Lanka	2	Pakistan	0

African Champions' League Result

Ferroviario Map (Moz)	2
G'fields (Gha)	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zamalek	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Ferroviario Map	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Club Africain	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Goldfields	2	0	1	1	1	2	1

Japanese Summaries

Grampus Eight	0
Gamba Osaka	1
Kashima Antlers	5
Verdy Kawasaki	0
Jubilo Iwata	2
Kashiwa Reysol	1
Sanf Hiros	2
YokoMarinos	3
Yokohama Flugels	1
Urawa Red Diamonds	3
Vissel Kobe	4
KyotoPurple Sanga	2
Avispa Fukuoka	1
Bellmare Hiratsuka	2
Cerezo Osaka	1
JEF United Ichihara	0

	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Gamba Osaka	10	8	2	25	14	22
Kashima Antlers	9	7	2	32	11	21
Jubilo Iwata	9	7	2	20	11	21
Yoko Marinos	9	7	2	25	16	18
Urawa R Dia	10	6	4	18	11	18
Bellmare Hiratsuka	9	6	3	20	17	16
Shimizu Pulse	9	5	4	17	12	15
Cerezo Osaka	10	6	4	19	18	15
Nag Gramp Eight	9	5	4	12	16	15
Sanfrecce Hiro	10	4	6	15	16	12
Yokohama Flugels	9	4	5	15	17	11
JEF United Ichihara	9	4	5	10	13	10
Kashiwa Reysol	10	3	7	18	24	8
Verdy Kawasaki	9	3	6	13	25	8
Avispa Fukuoka	10	3	7	11	17	7
Kyoto Purp Sanga	9	1	8	12	24	3
Vissel Kobe	10	1	9	10	30	3

Danish Super League Results

FC Copenhagen	3	Ikast	1
Aalborg	3	Brondby	0
OB Odense	1	Aarhus Fremad	1
Silkeborg	1	AB Cop	0
AGF Aarhus	1	Vejle	2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FC Copenhagen	7	5	2	0	18	9	17
Silkeborg	7	5	2	0	12	5	17
Brondby	7	4	0	3	19	13	12
Copenhagen	7	3	3	1	14	9	12
Vejle	7	4	0	3	11	10	12
Aalborg	7	3	2	2	14	9	11
Lyngby	6	3	1	2	14	18	10
Ikast	7	3	0	4	13	17	9
AGF Aarhus	7	2	0	5	11	13	6
Aarhus Fremad	7	1	1	5	12	18	4
Herfoelge	6	1	1	4	6	16	4
OB Odense	7	0	2	5	5	12	2

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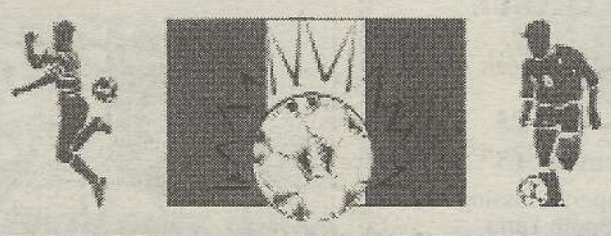
WORLD CUP FOOTBALL FRANCE 1998



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1986 MEXICO	1986 ARGENTINA
1990 ITALY	1990 GERMANY
1994 USA	1994 BRAZIL

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- Stadium Tickets
- Hotel Accommodation
- Transfers to and from Airport
- Transfers to and from Stadium
- Intercity Transfers by either Air or Luxury Coach
- Fully Escorted

Package (Prices per person)	••• Tourist	•••• Superior Tourist	••••• First Class
7 Match Category 3	4,877	5,640	6,408
7 Match Category 2	5,225	6,025	6,825
7 Match Category 1	5,462	6,262	7.062
Single Supplement	1,280	1,920	2,560

'Second Round' Championship (inc. Finals)

The Package Includes:
- Return Economy Airfares
- 4 Stadium Tickets on Second Round Match — Quarter & Semi Final Match — 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Place Finals
- Transfers to and from Airports
- Hotel Accommodation
- Intercity Transfers by either Air or Luxury Coach
- Fully Escorted

Package (Prices per person)	••• Tourist	•••• Superior Tourist	••••• First Class
8 Match Category 3	5,967	6,567	7,368
8 Match Category 2	6,450	7,257	7,857
8 Match Category 1	7,497	8,297	8,897
Single Supplement	1,280	1,920	2,560

'First & Second' Round Championship (inc. Finals)

The Package Includes:
- Fully Escorted
- Return Economy Airfares
- 11 Stadium Tickets — 1st and 2nd Round
- Quarter & Semi Final Matches — 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th Place Finals
- Transfers to and from Airports & Stadiums
- Hotel Accommodation
- Intercity Transfers by either Air or Luxury Coach
- Fully Escorted

Package (Prices per person)	••• Tourist	•••• Superior Tourist	••••• First Class
15 Match Category 3	7,886	10,607	11,976
15 Match Category 2	8,625	11,282	12,882
15 Match Category 1	9,690	12,559	14,159
Single Supplement	2,560	3,840	5,120

All package prices based ex Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane.
Applicable add ons for other capital cities. First Class, Business and Round World options are available.
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DRINKING FINE BY FIFA

There appears some confusion as to when players and officials may drink liquids while a game is in progress.

FIFA, acutely aware that the balance of water is in the body is paramount to a healthy body, have actively encouraged its consumption during play.

However, in order to minimise unruly behaviour on the field and/or possible injury, to players should drink containers be thrown onto the pitch, the governing body has set down the following guidelines which must be reserved at all times:

Many thanks to FIFA News magazine for setting the record straight.

1. Liquids may only be drunk during stoppages in play.
2. Drinks must be contained in plastic bottles and handed to the players on the sidelines.
3. Neither the bottles nor any other receptacles may be thrown on to the field of play.
4. The goalkeeper may keep a drink in a plastic bottle in the corner of his goal.
5. For the players' benefit, the plastic bottles may be placed around the pitch approximately one metre away from the sidelines, and goal lines, but only as long as they do not obstruct the assistant referees in the execution of their duty.

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WOMEN'S WRITES

BY JANENE MAR

AUSSIES' DISAPPOINTING FINISH

Australia ended their month-long European Tour on a disappointing note, going down with a thud to Norway 7-1 last Sunday week in Oslo.

Olympic bronze medallists, and current World Cup holders, Norway were keen to dispel recent criticism thrown their way after the recent failure to reach the semi finals of the European Championship. Unfortunately it was the Australians who were made to pay, spoiling their hopes of finishing the tour as they had started: with an upset victory.

The Aussies suffered an early setback with defender Kristyn Swaffer carried off after just two minutes with an ankle injury.

The Norwegians were not about to extend their sympathies, and took advantage of Australia's misfortune, opening their account three minutes later through star striker Ann Kristin Aarones. The lead was doubled in the ninth minute, this time Marianne Petterson successful in front of goal.

Then to add to the Australians' unfolding nightmare, captain and defender Sonia Gegenhuber became the second casualty, stretchered from the pitch in the fourteenth minute with a neck injury.

To their credit, the visitors rallied together and fought hard, stemming the Norwegian wave of attack and regaining composure to create some attacking opportunities of their own.

Petterson had other ideas and blasted home her second into the bottom right corner of goal after 34 minutes. The rampage was far from over, as Petterson struck again, this time dispossessing Aussie defender Amy Taylor in sight of goal and calmly slotting the ball past keeper Belinda Kitching. The Petterson hat-trick, and Norway's fourth, completely demoralised the Aussies on the stroke of half-time.

After the break, a courageous Australia again hit back strongly, putting into action the game plan of slowing the opposition attack and breaking quickly forward once the midfield had won the ball.

But in the 55th minute, Norway's midfielder Margunn Haugenes, whose creativity had resulted in two of her side's first half goals, added her own name to the scoresheet with a fantastic volley.

Australia never gave in and continued their quest to move up and attack. Determined and focussed, they started to take some control and were confident enough to switch the ball along the backline and make forward progress through midfield.

One such build-up released Julie Murray on a path towards goal, but the striker was crudely tripped inside the box in the process. In the 71st minute, Murray herself stepped up to the spot and rifled the ball to the right of substitute Norwegian keeper Linda Ormen.

But the power of the champion side continued to prove too much and it was not long before Norway streaked further ahead. Petterson was not finished for the day and added to her tally with a perfectly timed volley with nine minutes remaining.

Their seventh was another Haugenes strike, burying a cross from the right in the final minute.

Goalkeeper Kitching received praise from the Norwegian Coach, Per Mathias Hogmo, for her brave showing and numerous spectacular saves. "We created more chances today than I had expected," he commented after the match. "I saw Australia play against The Netherlands a few weeks ago and I knew they would be difficult opposition. I am satisfied with the manner in which all of our team performed."

But Swaffer and Gegenhuber were ferried to hospital by ambulance, but thankfully were cleared of fractures or serious injury.

Australia: Kitching, Gegenhuber (Bartlett 17), Starr, Tann-Darby, Swaffer (Taylor 2 (Alicia Ferguson 84)), Casagrande (Duus 57), Cooper (Moore 63), Forman, Black, Murray, Revell.

Norway: Nordby (Orman 46), Kringen (Fagereng 82), Espeseth, Tonneson, Myklebust, Riise, Haugenes, Knutsen, Lehn (Sandaune 49), Aarones (Medalen 64), Petterson.

Tour Summary

Australia 1
Sweden 0
(Murray 59)
Australia 4
Hungary 0
(Duus 10, Moore 31, Black 60, 84)
Australia 1
The Netherlands.....1
(Casagrande 69)
(Griffioen 20)
Australia 0
Belgium.....1
(Carnol 20)
Australia 5
Estonia 1
(Salisbury 20, 63, Revell 31, Taylor 61, Murray 83)
(Morkovkina 2)
Australia 0
Finland 2
(Kalmari 69, Uusmalmi 89)
Australia 1
Norway.....7
(Murray 71) .....
(Aarones 5, Petterson 9, 34, 45, 81, Haugenes 55, 90)

European Tour Player Statistics

(SEVEN MATCHES ONLY)

	Starting Eleven	Came Off	Bench
Bartlett	2	5	0
Black	6	1	2
Casagrande	4	2	1
Cooper	6	1	0
Duus	3	3	1
Ferguson	1	2	0
Forman	4	1	0
Gegenhuber	5	0	0
Kitching	6	0	0
Moore	2	4	1
Murray	6	1	3
Paterson	1	0	0
Revell	6	0	1
Salisbury	3	0	2
Starr	6	0	0
Swaffer	5	1	0
Tann-Darby	6	1	0
Taylor	3	2	1
Thornton	1	4	0

Both players cleared of injury.

SENIOR WOMEN'S STATE TEAM SELECTED

The South Australian Women's Soccer Team, to compete in the 1997 National Championships, in Newcastle, from 20 to 27 September, has been selected.

"The team includes a mixture of past representatives and young players making their debut in the Senior Team," said Coach, Carl Maynard.

"The aim is to win four of our five games and make the final. If we play to our potential and play good football, the results will take care of themselves. A win in the first game will be a good start and ease the pressure," he said.

The Senior Team finished runners up in 1996, going down in the final to NSW 3-1.

Presentation of player's kits will be made at a Pasta Night Fundraiser, on Friday, September 12, commencing at 7.00pm, at the Sicilian Club, 45A OG Road, Klemzig, tickets are $10 for adults and $5 for children under 12.

Those wishing to support the team can obtain tickets from Julie on 8365 8058. All proceeds will go towards sending the team to the Championships, as players are obliged to pay their own costs.

The team is: Maria Doyle (Captain), Annie Cameron (Vice Captain), Belinda Gawlik (Elizabeth City), Rosy Gulino (Adelaide United), Lia Augumeri, Melissa Costanzo, Sandy Forte, Marie Spagndetti, Nicole Leonardis (Metro Knights), Natalie Thomas, Tiffany Winn (Sturt Marion), Dora Altintas, Rebecca Blacker, Sarah Hepworth (West Adelaide), Jenny Stupple (Magill Interno's), Shannon Kunst (Goalkeeper) (Elizabeth Vale), Robyn Hall (Goalkeeper) (Campbelltown City). (Coach) Carl Maynard, (Assistant Coach) Julie Anderson, (Manager) Franca DiBartolo.

Australian Women's Soccer Assoc1997 Senior National Championships

21ST - 27TH SEPTEMBER — NEWCASTLE

DAY 1	*Sunday 21st September*	
	11.00am	Tasmania v Victoria
	12.40pm	South Australia v Queensland
	2.20pm	Nthern NSW v Northern Territory
	4.00pm	West Australia v New South Wales
DAY 2	*Monday 22nd September*	
	10.00am	Northern Territory v Sth Australia
	11.40am	Victoria v Western Australia
	1.20pm	New South Wales v Northern NSW
	3.00pm	Queensland v Tasmania
DAY 3	*Tuesday 23rd September*	
	10.00am	Sth Australia v New South Wales
	11.40am	Northern Territory v Queensland
	1.20pm	Western Australia v Tasmania
	3.00pm	Northern NSW v Victoria
DAY 4	*Wednesday 24th September*	
	10.00am	Queensland v Western Australia
	11.40am	Tasmania v Northern NSW
	1.20pm	Victoria v South Australia
	3.00pm	NSW v Northern Territory
DAY 5	*Thursday 25th September*	
	10.00am	Northern NSW v Western Australia
	11.40am	South Australia v Tasmania
	1.20pm	New South Wales v Queensland
	3.00pm	Northern Territory v Victoria
DAY 6	*Friday 26th September*	
	10.00am	New South Wales v Tasmania
	11.40am	Northern Territory v West Australia
	1.20pm	Victoria v Queensland
	3.00pm	South Australia v Northern NSW
DAY 7	*Saturday 27th September*	
	2.00pm	FINAL

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
Julie Anderson, Assistant Coach (H) 8365 8058 Carl Maynard, Coach (H) 8363 0328

Marconi in upset for title

Marconi took top honours in this year's NSW Women's State League Division One First Grade, upsetting favourites and minor premiers NSW Institute of Sport with a blistering first half performance last Saturday week at Melita Stadium.

Overall a very young and relatively inexperienced Marconi had been built from scratch with the departure of the majority of last year's squad to other clubs.

But consistent high quality and talented performances saw them end the season in fourth position. Few thought they would go on to claim the title.

They scraped through its minor semi-final, defeating rivals NNSW ITC on a penalty shootout. Then, making their few opportunities on goal count, they defeated a strong Sydney United combination 2-0 in an emotion charged battle in the preliminary final, thus booking their berth for the big match.

NSWIS, who had topped the ladder by a clear five points, were expected to take the double, despite the absence of all their Australian Team representatives. They had reached the grand final at the first attempt, easily accounting for Sydney United in the major semi with a very polished performance.

However, the Fairfielders took the field fired up and desperately hungry for a result. Their mood was soon transferred to the scoresheet, taking the lead as early as the fifth minute.

Breaking forward quickly, youngster Michelle Carney found herself with the ball on the left, turned and struck home a low hard drive.

Marconi's domination of possession and opportunities on goal continued for the entire first half. NSWIS seemed somewhat shellshocked and lacked the spark and the answers to counter Marconi's power.

In the 37th minute, the lead was doubled, Carney again causing problems for the Institute defence. A pinpoint pass found Carney on the run heading towards goal. With a marker in two, Carney was pulled down on the left hand side of the box and a penalty awarded. Alicia Cavanagh converted from the spot, confidently smashing the ball into the top right corner of the net.

Just three minutes later, and NSWIS found themselves a demoralising three goals down before half-time. A well floated Carly Copeland corner was met close range by the head of Marconi midfielder Vicki Linton, sailing in just under the crossbar through a packed goalmouth.

After the break, NSWIS came out stronger and finally enjoyed territorial domination. But they still found it tough to penetrate a rock solid Fairfield defence, and get in sight of goal. With a comfortable lead under their belts, they were forced to soak up the pressure and hold out, and rarely advanced within shooting range for the second half.

NSWIS fought on and created some good chances in attack but any shots were confidently saved by keeper Natascia Cavaretta.

With no additions to the scoreline, Marconi celebrated their decisive victory as the referee signalled full time.

Marconi: Cavaretta, Warrener, Carney, Redmond, Linton, McLaughlin, Cavanagh, Link, Copeland (Spagnol), Graham (Burns), O'Neill.

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IN DIVISION One Reserve Grade, the NSW JETS added the championship to their minor premiers title, by defeating Sutherland Shire 2-1.

The JETS (Junior Elite Talent Squad) surprised everyone in this their first year in WSL ranks. A collection of young teenagers identified from various schools and junior teams, these players were selected to train and play in a junior development version of the ITC/NSWIS program at Parklea.

Originally planned as a three year program, the JETS have exceeded all expectations and proved an instant success in year one. Armed with exciting skills and talent, the JETS also combined beautifully as a unit and tactically aware.

Sutherland, second on the ladder for the season, were a much older combination with many years of WSL experience between them.

But the experience deserted them when it counted, Sutherland making a very poor start and finding themselves a goal down in the opening few minutes. The JETS maintained their clear domination and went two ahead midway through the first half. Goalscorers were Angela Murphy and Emma Shirt.

The second half saw a Sutherland fightback, with substitute Danielle Smith converting a long-range freekick in the first three minutes. Sutherland went in desperate search for the equaliser, but the JETS held out well to claim victory.

NSW JETS: Cam, McCall (Slatter), Jones (Havini), Beven, Shirt, Hensman, Adzic, Wilson, Murphy (Ghorra), Hudson, Davies.

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ST GEORGE Association successfully added the WSL Division Two championship to their minor premiership with a tight 1-0 win over Shoalhaven Association.

Boasting some experienced players and in their second WSL season, St George held off the challenges of the spirited South Coast team. A powerful and tall team, St George tussled hard against the smaller Shoalhaven side, making for what was a tough midfield battle for much of the grand final.

St George probably played the slightly better first half, but with no goals at the half time break. Shoalhaven came out in attack searching for goal for a sustained period at the start of the second half, pressuring the solid St George backline.

In the end, the deadlock was broken with fifteen minutes remaining via St George striker Fiona Foster. Her speculative long range effort found its mark for what became the winning goal.

St George Association: Patricia Calligas, Sarah Benson, Kylie Sellick, Maria Calligas, Olga Karpouzos, Nicole Chisholm, Ally Macguire, Danielle Breheny, Laura Maguire, Helen Kalithrakis, Fiona Foster. Subs: Danielle Pringle, Virgina Reay, Natasha Jovic.

◆◆◆◆◆

NSW's SEEDED knockout competition, the Waratah Shield, was taken out in convincing fashion by NSWIS last Wednesday night at Valentine Park with a 5-0 scoreline over rivals NNSW ITC.

The win in part made up for their disappointment of losing the WSL grand final and NSWIS looked like their usual selves as they carved up a lacklustre Northern side.

The match started quite evenly in a fast and furious physical battle. NSWIS then settled into a much smoother pattern and took the lead in the 34th minute. A neat exchange ended with Ashley Hewson hitting from in front high into the net.

Six minutes later and NSWIS were two ahead, Heather Garriock successful with a deft chip. NSWIS domination never waivered for the remainder of the final, NNSW looking lethargic and lacking shape and firepower.

Three minutes after the break, midfielder Taryn Rockall floated home a great strike from the edge of the box. A carbon copy shot from Rockall midway through the second half then put NSWIS to a four goal lead.

With full-time in sight, substitute Kelly Golebiowski slotted home after a fumble from the NNSW goalkeeper. The match was Golebiowski's first competitive appearance since sidelined by knee injury last December.

NSWIS: Cassandra Kell, Danielle Clarke, Neisha Klessattel, Nicole Davis, Gill Thomson, Kristine Collins, Heather Garriock, Amanda Boyle, Ashley Hewson, Taryn Rockall, Lisa Collins. Subs: Kelly Golebiowski, Amanda Parker, Catriona Watt.

South Australian Soccer

By Val Migliaccio

BIRKALLA TO CHALLENGE RAIDERS IN GRAND FINAL!

West Torrens Birkalla have won the right to contest the Premier League Grand Final against Raiders next Saturday. Adelaide Blue Eagles were their victims in the Mutual Community Preliminary Final which Birkalla eventually won on penalties when this exciting game was locked at 2-2 after 120 minutes.

Adelaide Blue Eagles now relinquish their hat-trick of Championships after one of the most intriguing Finals battles seen for many years.

The match, played in slippery conditions at Thebarton Oval, soon had Birkalla back peddling when in the third minute midfield workhorse Paul Simmons thundered a drive from 25 metres which Birkalla keeper Daniel Bieze tipped onto the crossbar.

West Torrens soon picked up their momentum when the Barbaro brothers, Sam and Joe, combined to set up Jason Trimboli in the box, but his shot missed the target by centimetres.

Blue Eagles player/coach, Zorán Karadzic, displayed why A League clubs are still interested in his services, when, in the 41st minute he expertly dribbled around two Birkalla opponents to find Michael Berlingeri who blasted his shot wide from seven metres.

Young Tony Zito worked hard on the left for Blue Eagles and in the 43rd minute took the ball to the by line and squared it for Joe Berlingeri, who sprayed his shot from point blank range.

The second half opened with the Blue Eagles gaining the ascendancy but could not penetrate the opposition defence.

In the 72nd minute the Barbaro brothers combined, with Joe Barbaro's attempt at goal falling to Sam Barbaro who turned onto his left and gave Blue Eagles keeper Gino DeLucia no chance with a solid drive to give Birkalla the lead.

A minute later, however, they were dealt a harsh blow when Lachlan Campbell received his second yellow card and was consequently sent off.

Adelaide Blue Eagles picked up the pace and in the 83rd minute Anthony Giordano found Karadzic with a brilliant cross inside the box only for the latter to miss the goal by millimetres.

The final five minutes must have felt like an eternity for Birkalla and one minute into stoppage time, defender Tony Giannitto smashed a power drive from 30 metres — Bieze parried — and young Giordano managed to chip the rebound into the net to take the match into extra time.

Blue Eagles commenced the extra time period in much the same way they finished off regulation time. Against the run of play, in the 95th minute, Joe Barbaro brought the ball down sweetly on his chest inside the box and thundered Birkalla's second goal into the roof of the net.

The Blue Eagles still plugged away and in the 104th minute a Karadzic touch of brilliance found substitute Robert Garruccio inside the box, whose sublime chip over the advancing Bieze evened the tie.

Right at the end of extra-time Zito made great space for himself inside the box and but shot was hastily cleared off the line by Birkalla. The tie finishing 2-2 after 120 riveting minutes: Birkalla subsequently won the Preliminary Final winning 4-1 on penalties.

Birkalla's coach, Charley Villani, was visibly drained and after the match he said: "This side is at its best when the chips are down and today we proved that we are good enough. This week I'll work on a few problems that need to be rectified and we have to sort out the problem of not having Lachlan Campbell for the Grand Final. As for the Grand Final, it comes down to who's good enough on the day!"

Next week's Premier League Grand Final is a 2.35pm kick off at Thebarton Oval, with the Raiders hot favourites to take out the championship against a valiant West Torrens Birkalla.

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IN THE State league Preliminary Final, Elizabeth won themselves a berth in the Grand Final, and promotion to the 1998 Premier League, with a solid 2-0 victory over Croydon Kings, who have one final chance to play Premier league Soccer in 1998 when they meet Salisbury United in a promotion/relegation play off (date still to be decided).

Elizabeth took 70 minutes to break the deadlock. Marc Woods, who had a tremendous game, knocked in a wicked cross which was unluckily deflected into the back of the net by a Kings defender.

Croydon had their chances to equalise; in the 72nd minute Joel Porter was set free only to be denied by the great goalkeeping of Ben Moore.

In the 90th minute Graham Latham scored the second goal for Elizabeth, from close range, finishing off a fine move started by Mike Iocavino.

Elizabeth now face old foes, Cumberland Foxes, in the State League Grand Final at Thebarton Oval next Saturday, kicking off at 11.30pm.

Dick Patruno PORT PIRIE'S MAN!

Dick Patruno, coach of Port Pirie City has come a long way since his days living in Port Adelaide. In the early years he was a striker for Port Adelaide and played over 200 senior grade matches; being part of their last Federation Cup winning side in 1979 (scoring two goals in the final against Adelaide Blue Eagles).

In 1980 he left the comforts of the Port for the northern town of Claire and ran a pub. It was in Claire that Patruno became familiar with Port Pirie, and decided to play for Port Pirie Savoy.

He played another 200 matches for Savoy and was a vital part of the club, which was started by Italian immigrant fishermen and still has that tradition deeply embedded in the club.

Now known as Port Pirie City, it was last year which saw history being created with them being admitted to the Federation State League.

"This is our second year in the league and I am happy with our progress. In the first year I expected the boys to win six and they won eight.

This year I expected up to make the Top Four play offs and here we are!"

The team regularly attracts 400-500 spectators to matches, with the number growing by the week. "You have to understand that in Port Pirie there is an immense rivalry between us and Port Pirie Virtus, another club with great tradition. Gradually the Virtus supporters are coming to watch us and it won't be long before we can attract crowds of 1,000 to a match."

This year City have really surprised many State league teams with their brand of Soccer — three major signings have bolstered their ranks.

Lemmy Vatsilas, in his second year, has worked wonders for the side with eight of their players under the age of 21. Paul Higgins and Colin Miller have also contributed a great deal to their success.

When Patruno's boys travel they sometimes have to cover more than 500 kilometres in a round trip.

"Our boys love the travelling, in fact, we are very much used to it, after playing in the NASA league, travelling to Whyalla is much the same sort of distance we would travel to Adelaide. We've got the travel arrangements down to a tee — leaving home at 9.30 in the morning and, if we come home with a victory, celebrating on the bus all the way back."

The three "foreigners" in the side, Vatsilas, Higgins and Miller, all train in Adelaide during the week and sometimes, when there is a Sunday morning training session, they stay back and have a run with the side. For some teams these circumstances would definitely hurt their chances but for City it's all part of playing in the tough Federation league.

Dick Patruno has set his goals for City — allowing a couple of years before they will challenge to be in the Premier League.

"The boys, when they were playing in the NASA league, just did enough. Now that we are up against class opposition every week they have responded well and are working very hard.

"The skill factor has improved immensely since we entered the State league and we started pre-season for this year in October 1996. We worked on technique and it's great to see the boys progressing. I have seen a lot of them play their first game at five and six years old in Pirie and now some are playing first team Soccer. I'm like a father figure to them and the atmosphere in the clubroom at the end of the match is superb.

"It's a great community club with everyone getting involved and now some of our schools have seen the value that Soccer can bring and are coming to watch our matches.

"We have good junior development plans in place and I'd say in the next two or three years, Port Pirie will produce players that will play in our Ericsson Cup National league."

PREMIER LEAGUE

OVERVIEW By MICHAEL PETRILLO

The 1997 U/19 Premier League season commenced with Campbelltown Red Devils as the "Red Hot" favourites after clinching the title in 1996, and keeping the majority of their players in 1997.

Rounds one to five proved the Red Devils to be the yardstick, albeit with some strong performances from White City.

Adelaide Blue Eagles had an inconsistent start as their young squad tried to establish themselves. Raiders struggled while Birkalla and Olympians were no easy beats and Salisbury showed they would provide strong opposition.

Rounds six to ten saw the Red Devils keep up the pressure. White City, after looking devastating early, seemed to lose their way. Adelaide Blue Eagles started to show consistency.

Port Lion made a charge and Salisbury, Olympians and Birkalla were making things difficult for all sides. Raiders continued to disappoint.

Adelaide Blue Eagles emerged as a genuine threat in rounds 11-15, and they headed the table after defeating Red Devils for the second time in the season. Port Lion continued their good results by using experienced players, but White City couldn't sustain their early season form. Salisbury kept nagging away with solid performances while the Raiders and Olympians season looked all but over

surprised with some interesting results from a relatively young squad.

Rounds 16-21 proved to be the most dramatic period of the season. Adelaide Blue Eagles, Campbelltown and Port Lion, all with a chance of finishing top. The young Blue Eagles, proving to be the most consistent side, to secure the minor premiership.

Port Lion and Campbelltown finished on the same points just behind in second and third place respectively. Salisbury snatched the fourth finals place with a good solid season.

White City finished a disappointing fifth while Birkalla battled valiantly all season. Olympians fell away towards the latter half of the term and Raiders failed to trouble the winning column in a disastrous season.

It should prove to be an absorbing climax to the season with minor premiers Adelaide Blue Eagles, Port Lion and Campbelltown all able to make their mark on the finals series. Salisbury, although finishing fourth, could also provide a surprise or two and should not be dismissed.

With so many stars of the future on display, the 1997 Mutual Community U/19 finals series should be one of the most exciting ones in recent years.

DON'T MISS IT!

HOMESTART FINAL SERIES: WHO WILL BE INAUGURAL CHAMPS?

The Homestart FUTSAL League Top Four Final series kicks off and concludes on 14 September at the Campbelltown Sporting Complex. The inaugural series will be the ultimate climax to a fine season and no Soccer fan should miss it!

The four best FUTSAL teams in the state competing are: Adelaide Force, Port Lion, Campbelltown Red Devils and North East Rangers. Who will be crowned champions?

In the first Semi Final, Campbelltown Red Devils and North East Rangers go head to head and the two have worked up quite a rivalry over the season.

This match will see the Red Devils at full strength with the return of veteran Drago Ilicic and the very impressive Athan Lekkas. They will be driven by play maker Nick Sabjlak, and youngsters Dino Paris and Domenic Signoriello.

Omero Gosti could be in doubt for the clash and head trainer Remo Paris will work frantically over the next few days to ensure his injury will not deter him from taking his place.

Rangers will have Joe Rechichi, who can cause damage with his tight ball skills and tough competitiveness. If Tony Puntillo returns for the Semi Final they will have another trump card and it will push the Red Devils to the limit. The loser will automatically be knocked out with the winner progressing to the Preliminary Final.

In what should be a humdinger, the second Semi Final match of the series sees the strong Port Lion Pirates clash with Adelaide Force. The Pirates have an awesome line up and Chris Groom will be pumped up to the max!

With Pirates' hard man, George Haralabakis, in form and the brilliant Robert Matosevic in goals, the Force will have to be at their very best.

They have many players who can open up the Pirates with striker Spiros Simeonakis sure to display the form which has caught the eye of fans around the FUTSAL stadiums.

Coach Frank Blazivic has many years experience in Federation finals campaigns and this should be a beneficial factor.

Gianni La Scala and Lars Kruse have impressed throughout the season and the superb ball skills of Siamek Fallah will be a treat.

The winner of this intriguing battle will go directly to the Grand Final and the loser has the double chance in the Preliminary Final — which will be played directly after the second Semi Final.

TOBIN LIKENED TO WADE

In a recent interview on ABC News Radio, Socceroo captain Alex Tobin spoke very highly of coach Terry Venables. He mentioned the enthusiasm in which he had been received by our players and his 100% success rate.

People were more impressed, however, with Tobin's obvious ability in public speaking. He appeared totally at ease when commenting on Soccer's current position and future prospects.

Tobin stressed the need for Soccer to be promoted by professional administrators, as well as success at international level, if it was to realise its full potential.

Our present Socceroo skipper was well spoken and also proved to have the intelligence required to become an excellent role model for Soccer, possibly following in the steps of former Socceroo captain, Paul Wade.

SOUTH AMERICA

— Compiled by Mario Etchart —

STH AMERICAN LEAGUES

ARGENTINA

Independiente and Rosario Central are joint leaders in the Argentine league first phase, after their respective wins over Huracan and defending champion River Plate in the second round of the competition.

Meanwhile Boca Juniors, without its star player Diego Armando Maradona, only managed a 2-2 draw against Platense and San Lorenzo beat Racin Club 3-2 in the local derby.

Other results: Estudiantes of La Plata 2 Gimnasia y Esgrima of La Plata 2, Argentinos Juniors 1 Lanus 0. Newell's Old Boys 3 Unionof Santa Fe 0, Colon 2 Ferro Carril Oeste 2, Velez Sarsfield 2 Gimnasia y Tiro Jujuy 1.

Standings: Independiente and Rosario 6 points; Boca Juniors, Ferro Carril Oeste, Gimnasia y Esgrima and Estudiantes of La Plata, Velez Sarsfield 4; River Plate, Gimnasia y Tiro, Union, Argentinos, San Lorenzo, Newell's Old Boys 3, Platense, Colon, Racing 1; Deportivo Espanol, Gimnasia y Tiro, Lanus, Huracan 0.

Next round: (12-14 September): Gimnasia y Tiro v San Lorenzo, Racing Club v Estudiantes, Gimnasia y Esgrima of La Plata v Independiente, Huracan v Gimnasia y Tiro, Espanol v Colon, Ferro Carril Oeste v River Plate, Rosario Central v Lanus, Boca Juniors v Newell's Old Boys, Platense v Argentinos Juniors, Union v Velez Sarsfield.

CHILE

Chilean first phase champion Universidad Catolica leads the national league second phase after its 3-2 dramatic home victory over a surprising Coquimbo Unido side.

Last year's champion, Colo Colo had a comfortable 3-0 win over Deportes Concepcion while the other giant of Chilean football, Universidad de Chile lost 4-2 away with Palestino.

Other results: Union Espanola 5 La Serena 4, Antofagasta 0 Audax Italiano 0, Huachipato 1 Puerto Montt 1, Temuco 2 Santiago Wanderers 0, Osorno 2 Cobeloa 1.

Standings after five rounds: Universidad Catolica 13 points; Colo Colo 12 (one game in hand); Universidad de Chile 11; Union Espanola 10; Puerto Montt 8; Cobreloa, Osorno Palestino 7; Huachipato, Temuco 6; Concepcion, Audax Italiano 5; Antofagasta 4; Santiago Wanderers, Coquimbo Unido 2; La Serena 1.

Next round: the big derby between Universidad Catolica and Colo Colo at Catolica's San Carlos de Apoquindo stadium. Other matches: Audax Italiano v Osorno, Concepcion v Antofagasta, Santiago Wanderers v Coquimbo Unido, La Serena v Temuco, Puerto Montt v Union Espanola, Universidad de Chile v Huachipato, Cobreloa v Palestino.

COLOMBIA

Independiente Santa Fe caused the biggest surprise of the Colombian national league ninth round, when the "cafeteros" defeated Millonarios 2-0 in Bogota. Millonarios defender Flaminio Rivas netted an own goal while striker Luis Angulo scored Independiente's second.

In Cali, America, the unlucky Colombian side, four times Libertadores Cup runner up, beat arch rival Deportivo Cali, 2-1, in the local derby, while in another derby, in Medellin, Atletico Nacional beat Atletico Medellin 2-0.

Other results: Unicosta 4 Junior 3, Magdalena 3 Bucaramanga 1, Tulua 3 Quindio 2, Tolima 1 Envigado 0, Caldas 2 Pereira 4.

Standings: Junior of Barranquilla, in group A, and Deportivo Cali, in group B, are the current leaders of the competition.

ECUADOR

Liga Deportiva Universitaria of Quito, who only managed a 1-1 draw at home with Emelec of Guayaquil, leads the Ecuadorean national Soccer league after the seventh rounds was completed.

Deportivo Quito who is in second place, two points behind the leader drew 0-0 away with the third placed Barcelona of Guayaquil, in Quito.

Other results: Deportivo Cuenca 1 Espoli 1, Aucas 1 Calvi 0, Nacional 3 Olmedo 0, Tecnico Universitario 5 Deportivo Quevedo 0.

Standings: Liga Deportiva Universitaria de Quito 17 points; Deportivo Quito 15; Deportivo Cuenca 14; Barcelona, Aucas 12; Tecnico Universitario 11; Emelec, Espoli 9; Nacional 8; Calvi 5; Olmedo 3; Quevedo 1.

PERU

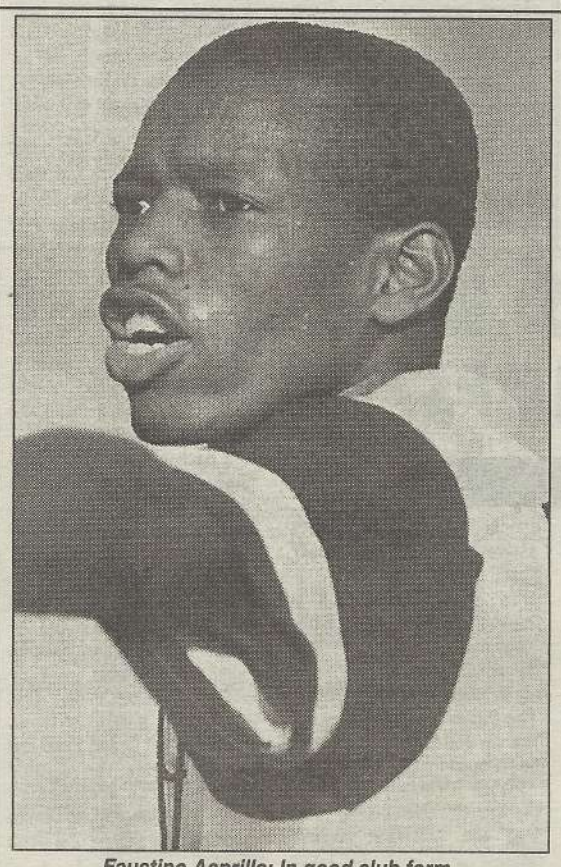
In Peru, the local derby between leaders Alianza Lima and Universitario was postponed but Alianza maintains the lead in the national league, one point ahead of the "students".

The most important match, between defending champions Sporting Cristal and Jose Galvez, finished 2-1 in favour of Cristal. Ghanian striker Annor Azis and Brazilian forward Julinho scored, while Galvez pulled one back through a penalty executed by Isidio.

Azzis and Peruvian international goalkeeper Julio Balerio were sent off midway through the second half.

Other results: Cianciano 2 Sports Boys 1, Atletico Torino 2 Alcides Vigo 5, Melgar 2 Municipal 0, La Lorentana 1 Pesquero 1, Union Minas 0 Alianza Atletico 0.

Standings: Alianza Lima 13 points; Universitario 12; Alianza Atletico, Melgar 11; Union Minas, Sporting Cristal 10; Cianciano 8; Sport Boys Galvez, Pesquero 6; La Loretana 5; Alcides Vigo 4; Torino, Municipal 3.



Faustino Asprilla: In good club form.

Crucial World Cup Qualifying Round in South America

This week another important round will be played for the South American 1998 World Cup qualifying group, with the matches between Chile and Argentina, in Santiago, Peru and Uruguay, in Lima, and Paraguay and Bolivia, in Asuncion, the crucial ones for some of the teams involved.

Chile, with an unbeaten record at home, will face the leader of the group, Argentina, in a match where a result is very difficult to predict.

Last year, the Chileans took an important point against the Argentines in Buenos Aires, and with the support of the crowd could take three points, putting them in an excellent position to qualify for France '98. The only doubt will be Ivan Zamorano, the Inter Milan striker who was absent from the squad when Chile lost 1-0 in Montevideo against Uruguay.

The strike force of Zamorano and Marcelo Salas is one of the biggest and most important assets in Nelson Acosta's side. Without at least one of them up front, it is a big handicap to overcome.

Argentina, after some ordinary matches during the first half of the qualifying rounds, have improved steadily, and practically stand with one foot in next year's World Cup.

Passarella, after enormous pressure and criticism from all sectors of the Argentine press, stood firm and consolidated his position, a place now recognised by everybody.

The Argentine national coach recalled Fiorentina striker Gabriel Batistuta for the game against Chile, and his inclusion is a big boost for the current leaders, after the impressive performance he gave against Udinese in the first round of the Italian Serie A. The aptly named"Bati-goal" scored a hat-trick in Fiorentina's 3-2 away victory and should go some way to making the Chilean v Argentina match a very interesting spectacle to watch. Prediction: a 1-1 draw.

In Lima, a much improved Peruvian side, who beat Venezuela 3-0 away, will play at home against Uruguay in a crucial match for both teams, especially for the Uruguayans, who had a moral boost after their 1-0 win over Chile in Montevideo.

Uruguayan coach, the aging Roque Gaston Maspoli, recalled Inter Milan hero Alvaro Recoba for the game against Peru. Recoba had an impressive debut for Inter, where he came on as a replacement midway through the second half, to score two outstanding goals against Brescia, in their 2-1 victory over the newly promoted team.

Recoba, who was transferred from Uruguayan league first phase champion Nacional, has been out of the national squad since the former Copa America champions drew with Colombia in Montevideo.

Gabriel Batistuta: Recalled to Argentine squad.

The youngster will be an important addition to the squad who will travel to Lima without Juventus defender Paolo Montero, suspended after his sending off against Chile.

Peru, coached by former international midfielder Juan Carlos Oblitas, have reached their best form at the right time, and will be slight favourites to win the game. Prediction: Peru 1-0.

Meanwhile, Paraguay, who have suffered a bad run in the last three matches, will be at home against Bolivia. The Paraguayans need only one win from their last three games to qualify for the World Cup Finals for the first time since Mexico '86.

Playing in Asuncion, the team coached by Brazilian tactician Paulo Cesar Carpegiani will be too strong for a Bolivian side who has to play all their remaining matches away. Prediction: Paraguay 2-0.

In the last match, Colombia will be clear favourites to take the three points against the weakest team of the qualifying rounds: Venezuela.

With strikers Anthony De Avila and Faustino Asprilla in good form, the Colombians are too strong and too classy for the Venezuelans.

Prediction: Colombia 4-0 and a berth in France '98.

Ecuador, with 18 points, have a bye.

Zamorano: Doubtful for the match against Argentina.

By STUART JONES

Weird & Wonderful

1931-1932

Everton had a thing or two to prove now they had returned to the top flight as second division champions. The only way to prove how good they really were was to win the title, and that is precisely what they did.

Previous holders Arsenal were pushed into second place and over the next few seasons it would be shown just how hard a feat this was. Everton won the title despite an away record that saw only eight wins out of twenty two games and 32 goals scored (at home they scored an incredible 84!).

They lost their last game 1-0 at home while Arsenal won 4-0 against Blackburn, but it still was not enough and the title went to Merseyside for the first time since 'Dixie' Deans' goal scoring triumphs for the Blues in 1927/28. Sheffield Wednesday were again third, proving they remained a big force in the game.

At the bottom, Blackpool showed great escape skills as they avoided the drop by a single point, the dubious honour going to Grimsby Town and West Ham.

From Division Two came Wolves, who were champions, and Leeds United. Plymouth Argyle had worked their way into fourth spot, just behind Stoke. Bristol City finished bottom of the second flight, Barnsley and Port Vale finishing on equal points, the 'Tykes' going down on percentage.

There had been a shake up in the third division with Newport County and Nelson failing to get re-elected, with Mansfield Town and Chester replacing them, and Walsall transferred to the Southern Division.

Division Three South saw Fulham win the title and Thames coming last. The northern section was a much closer affair and was thrown into turmoil when Wigan Borough resigned early in the season (October 26, 1931) — their record being expunged from the books.

Lincoln and Gateshead were the last two standing in terms of promotion in the championship race coming into the last round. Lincoln lost 3-4 to Hartlepool, giving Gateshead the chance if they won by a big enough margin. Their 2-0 victory over Walsall was not enough and they missed the top spot on percentage. It would be the closest the Geordies would ever come to winning promotion again.

The 50th year of FA Cup finals was celebrated by Arsenal and Newcastle who defeated Blackpool, Southport, Leicester, Watford and Chelsea along the way.

Arsenal's road to Wembley took in Darwen, Plymouth Argyle, Portsmouth, Huddersfield and Manchester City.

A crowd of 92,298 were at Wembley Stadium, (originally known as the Empire Stadium), to observe a very controversial match. David Jack had opening the scoring for the Londoners, giving them a distinct advantage as history showed that no team had been able to win after conceding the opening goal of the game in over 20 years.

Allen equalised for Newcastle from a Richardson cross. This caused much consternation as he apparently retrieved the ball after it had gone out of play behind the goal line, many remarks being passed at half-time about the goal or 'non-goal' (it has since been proven on video that the ball had in fact dissected the goal line but of course, back then it had been allowed to stand).

Into the second period of play, and despite solid defending from Arsenal, Allen was able to slot home a second — and ultimately winning — goal for Newcastle. The King of England duly delivered the FA Cup into Newcastle's possession.

Dartford were champions of the Southern League Eastern Section, a single point ahead of Folkestone. Both clubs had started poorly but came home emphatically at the finish. Aldershot had a poor year but managed to gain election to the Football League the following year.

Yeovil and Petters United won the Western Section of the league after defeating second placed Plymouth reserves 1-0. Sheppey United and Ebbw Vale finished bottom of the east and west respectively.

In the championship play-off, Dartford were victorious once more, this time 2-1. Meanwhile, Yeovil scored an incredible 225 goals in competitions this season, deadly Cecil Pemberton grabbing 69!

There was a surprise in Scotland after a team who had performed well over the last few seasons finally took the title from Glasgow.

Motherwell finished clear of Rangers by five points with Celtic finishing third, however, the year was marred by the death of their goalkeeper John Thomson, who suffered a depressed fracture of the skull in a game against Rangers.

Dundee United and Leith Athletic were relegated from the top flight and were replaced by second division champions East Stirling, and runners-up St Johnstone, and Edinburgh City came last.

In the FA Cup, Kilmarnock drew 1-1 with Rangers in the Final.

Rangers lifted the silverware when they defeated Killie 3-0 in the replay, while Airdrie and Hamilton were losing sides in the semi-final matches.

Around Europe the Champions were:

Austria — Admira Wien (Double winners)
Belgium — Lierse SK
Bulgaria — Shipenski Sokol
Germany — Bayern Munich
Holland — Ajax (Cup — DFC Dordrecht)
Italy — FBC Juventus
Poland — Cargovia
Romania — Venus Bucuresti
Spain — Real Madrid CF (Cup — Athletic Club De Bilbao)
Sweden — AIK Stockholm
Switzerland — Lausanne Sports (Cup — Grasshoppers Zurich)

England Division One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Everton	42	18	0	3	84	30	8	4	9	32	34	56
Arsenal	42	14	5	2	52	16	8	5	8	38	32	54
Sheff Wed	42	14	4	3	60	28	8	2	11	36	54	50
Hudds Town	42	11	8	2	47	21	8	2	11	33	42	48
A Villa	42	15	1	5	64	28	4	7	10	40	44	46
WBA	42	12	4	5	46	21	8	2	11	31	34	46
Sheff Utd	42	13	3	5	47	32	7	3	11	33	43	46
Portsmouth	42	14	2	5	37	21	5	5	11	25	41	45
Birmingham	42	13	5	3	48	22	5	3	13	30	45	44
Liverpool	42	13	4	4	56	38	6	2	13	25	55	44
Newcastle	42	13	5	3	52	31	5	1	15	28	56	42
Chelsea	42	12	4	5	43	27	4	4	13	26	46	40
Sunderland	42	11	4	6	42	29	4	6	11	25	44	40
Man City	42	10	5	6	49	30	3	7	11	34	43	38
Derby Co	42	13	5	3	51	25	1	5	15	20	50	38
Blackburn	42	12	3	6	57	41	4	3	14	32	54	38
Bolton W	42	15	1	5	51	25	2	3	16	21	55	38
Midboro	42	12	3	6	41	29	3	5	13	23	60	38
Leicester	42	11	3	7	46	39	4	4	13	28	55	37
Blackpool	42	9	4	8	42	40	3	5	13	23	62	33
Grimsby T	42	11	4	6	39	28	2	2	17	28	70	32
West Ham	42	9	5	7	35	37	3	2	16	27	70	31

England Division Two

Wolves	42	17	3	1	71	11	7	5	9	44	38	56
Leeds Utd	42	12	5	4	36	22	10	5	6	42	32	54
Stoke C	42	14	6	1	47	19	5	8	8	22	29	52
Plymouth A	42	14	4	3	69	29	6	5	10	31	37	49
Bury	42	13	4	4	44	21	8	3	10	26	37	49
Bradford	42	17	2	2	44	18	4	5	12	28	45	49
Bradford C	42	10	7	4	53	26	6	6	9	27	35	45
Tottenham H	42	11	6	4	58	37	5	5	11	29	41	43
Millwall	42	13	3	5	43	21	4	6	11	18	40	43
Charlton A	42	11	5	5	38	28	6	4	11	23	38	43
Notts Forest	42	13	4	4	49	27	3	6	12	28	45	42
Man Utd	42	12	3	6	44	31	5	5	11	27	41	42
Preston NE	42	11	6	4	37	25	5	4	12	38	52	42
Southampton	42	10	5	6	39	30	7	2	12	27	47	41
Swansea T	42	12	4	5	45	22	4	3	14	28	53	39
Notts Co	42	10	4	7	43	30	3	8	10	32	45	38
Chesterfld	42	11	3	7	43	33	2	8	11	21	53	37
Oldham A	42	10	4	7	41	34	3	6	12	21	50	36
Burnley	42	7	8	6	36	36	6	1	14	23	51	35
Port Vale	42	8	4	9	30	33	5	3	13	28	56	33
Barnsley	42	8	7	6	35	30	4	2	15	20	61	33
Bristol C	42	4	7	10	22	37	2	4	15	17	41	23

England Division Three North

Lincoln City 57, Gateshead 57, Chester 50, Tranmere Rovers 49, Barrow 49, Crewe Alexandra 48, Southport 46, Hull City 45, York City 43, Wrexham 43, Darlington 38, Stockport County 37, Hartlepools United 37, Accrington Stanley 36, Doncaster Rovers 36, Walsall 35, Halifax Town 34, Carlisle United 33, Rotherham United 32, New Brighton 24, Rochdale 11.
*Wigan Borough resigned from the League.

England Division Three South

Fulham 57, Reading 55, Southend United 53, Crystal Palace 51, Brentford 48, Luton Town 47, Exeter City 47, Brighton & Hove Albion 46, Cardiff City 46, Norwich City 46, Watford 46, Coventry City 44, QPR 42, Northampton Town 39, Bournemouth 38, Clapton Orient 35, Swindon Town 34, Bristol Rovers 34, Torquay United 33, Mansfield Town 32, Gillingham 28, Thames 23.

England Southern League Eastern Section

Dartford 27, Folkestone 26, Guildford City 23, Norwich City Res 20, Millwall Res 20, Tunbridge Wells Rangers 19, Bournemouth Res 16, Peterborough & Fletton United 13, Aldershot Town 11, Sheppey United 5.

England Southern League Western

Yeovil & Petters United 36, Plymouth Argyle Res 35, Bath City 31, Llanelly 28, Taunton Town 28, Newport County Res 26, Exeter City Res 25, Merthyr Town 22, Bristol Rovers Res 20, Swindon Town Res 20, Barry 17, Torquay United Res 16, Ebbw Vale 8.

Scotland Division One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Motherwell	38	30	6	2	119	31	66
Rangers	38	28	5	5	11[illegible]	42	61
Celtic	38	20	8	10	94	50	48
T Lanark	38	21	4	13	92	81	46
St Mirren	38	20	4	14	77	56	44
Partick T	38	19	4	15	58	59	42
Aberdeen	38	16	9	13	57	49	41
Hearts	38	17	5	16	63	61	39
Kilmarnock	38	16	7	15	68	70	39
Hamilton A	38	16	6	16	84	65	38
Dundee	38	14	10	14	61	72	38
Cowdenbeath	38	15	8	15	66	78	38
Clyde	38	13	9	16	58	70	35
Airdrie	38	13	6	19	74	81	32
Morton	38	12	7	19	78	87	31
Queens Park	38	13	5	20	59	79	31
Ayr Utd	38	11	7	20	70	90	29
Falkirk	38	11	5	22	70	76	27
Dundee Utd	38	6	7	25	40	118	19
Leith A	38	6	4	28	137	16	17

Scotland Division Two

East Stirling 55, St Johnstone 55, Raith Rovers 46, Stenhousmuir 46, St Bernard's 45, Forfar Athletic 45, Hibernian 44, East Fife 41, Queen of the South 41, Dunfermline Athletic 40, Arbroath 39, Dumbarton 38, Alloa 35, Bo'ness 34, Kings Park 33, Albion Rovers 28, Montrose 28, Armadale 25, Brechin City 25, Edinburgh City 17.

UK NEWS

By MICKY BROCK

Yeboah Ready To Move On

TONY YEBOAH could return to play in the Bundesliga.

Hamburg have put in a one million pound, that manager George Graham is considering, which would finally bring to an end the unhappy period with Leeds United.

The Premier League side have agreed on the fee with the German club, and Yeboah has accepted personal terms. The transfer looks certain to go ahead subject to a medical examination, normally a formality, which could yet prove a problem as the 31-year-old striker has not played in the Leeds first team since falling out with the 'Gaffer' in March.

Leeds managing director Jeremy Fenn, who has been involved in intensive talks with Hamburg officials, said, "Tony will travel to Germany for a fitness assessment. I would then hope the deal can be finalised."

There seems to be some turmoil within the club as Yeboah becomes the fourth high-profile player to leave Elland Road in the past two months following the departures of Brian Deane (to Sheffield United), Ian Rush (Newcastle) and Tony Dorigo (Torino).

Carlton Palmer and Thomas Brolin also remain on the transfer list.

Tony Adams: Counselling to Ferdinand.

Tony Yeboah: Off to Hamburg?

Glenn Hoddle Seeks Advice

ENGLAND MANAGER, Glenn Hoddle has enlisted the help of Tony Adams and Paul Merson in an attempt to offer counselling to West Ham's Rio Ferdinand after the youngster was convicted of a drink-driving offence last week.

He sees the previously mentioned players as the best advisers around when it comes to 'Alcohol abuse' and a way in which things can be kept 'in-house'.

The 18-year old player was set to become England's second youngest player if he made an appearance for the side against Moldova in the World Cup qualifier. However, he was told by Hoddle that he now had no chance of earning his first cap after being arrested and pleading guilty to the offence.

Hoddle added, "I am not saying that he won't play for England in the future.

"He hasn't robbed a bank and he hasn't killed anybody but between Harry Redknapp and myself we will see how he reacts to what's happened.

"I don't want to crucify him and we have had a good long chat. He's very disappointed with what he's done and feels he's let himself, his club and his family down.

"It's very unfortunate that he's got a year ban and a fine. It is a hard lesson for him but I hope it sends a signal to other young players."

Scotland's Biggest Crowd Reserved

THE BIGGEST crowd of the day north of the border recently was at Ibrox, home of Glasgow Rangers.

Not much new there you may believe but when you consider the crowd of 33,800 turned up to watch the 'Auld Firm' derby between their RESERVE sides, it sheds a different light.

The match included: A 20-minute delay from the scheduled kick-off to allow the fans time to enter the ground, two players being sent-off, a dubious penalty awarded and 90-minutes of pulsating football, even if Celtic's most experienced player was just 19-years old.

Compare that to the home side who had Gordan Petric, Ian Durrant and Stuart McCall in the line-up and you get the impression that it was 'boys against men':

Other Bits...

FRANK CLARK returned to Nottingham Forest and masterminded a superb first Nationwide League win of the season for Manchester City.

Forest had the only 100 per cent record in the country and were hungrily looking forward to reclaiming their top-of-the-table place at their former boss's expense.

City had not won a game and a nightmare crisis was already staring them in the face. The Citizens won 2 -1 at the City Ground.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

ABERDEEN MANAGER Roy Aitken was given a vote of confidence this week, by his own players.

Defender Brian O'Neil was the spokesman for the team when he said they backed Aitken all the way. Indeed, it was Aitken that brought the player to Pittodrie when signing him from Celtic for 750,000 during the close season and was one of several high-profile players brought to the club along with: Mike Newell, Eoin Jess and Scotland keeper Jim Leighton.

However, the new look Dons have struggled to gel as a team so far this season and were well below their best when they drew 1-1 with Dundee United in their Premier League clash.

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WEST HAM'S Welsh international striker, John Hartson needs a cartilage operation.

Hartson has been struggling with the knee injury since the first home match of the season against Tottenham and, despite rest between matches, the injury has shown no signs of improvement.

West Ham are now resigned to losing Hartson for around a month but will delay the operation until October.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

MARK REIPER, the Hammers defender is in the middle of a tug of war between Celtic and Rangers. His replacement may be Steve Horvat — the Australian international.

The former Melbourne Knights player has joined the London side from Hadjuk Slit in Croatia.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

FORMER SCOTLAND and Manchester United hero Denis Law spoke out against the SFA's on-off decision to play their World Cup qualifier with Belarus at Pittodrie last Saturday.

Law joined in the public protest after they originally refused to move the game, which clashes with the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales.

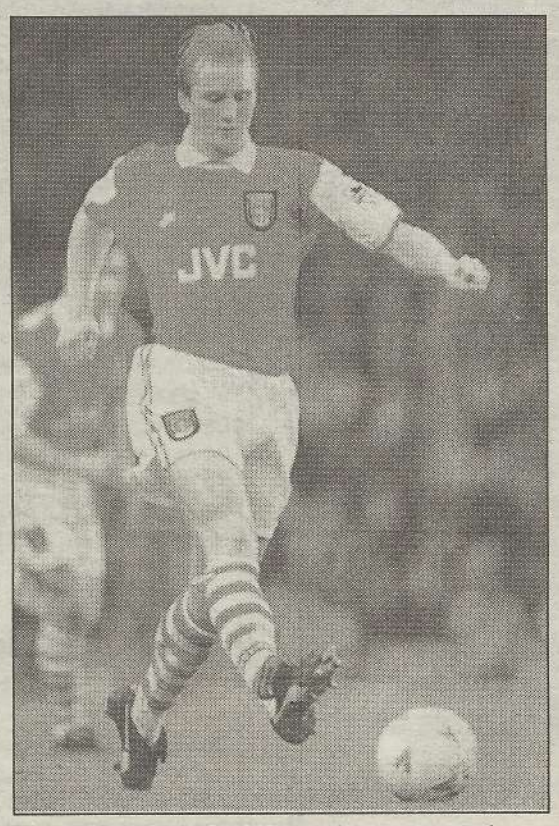
At the scheduled kick-off time of three o'clock, the funeral cortege will be heading up the M1 to Althorpe in Northamptonshire.

At time of writing, there was still no news as the whether the game, which FIFA have no objection to being postponed should both countries be agreeable to the idea, would go ahead or not.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

DICK KNIGHT finally took over as the Brighton chairman last week and immediately removed chief executive David Bellotti from the club and promised new cash for players.

Bellotti, the former MP for Eastbourne, has been with Brighton for nearly four years and was subjected to a hate campaign during Albion's last seasons at the Goldstone Ground when they nearly went out of business.



John Hartson: Could be out for up to a month.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

NEWCASTLE DEFENDER Darren Peacock, the club's player of the year, has had his return to the first-team squad put on hold.

The former QPR centre-half has fully recovered from two summer groin operations which kept him out of the club's pre-season preparations as well as their early season matches.

He had to call off a possible return for the reserves in their Pontins League, Third Division fixture against Doncaster because of a troublesome knee.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

CELTIC STAR Darren Jackson has ungergone brain surgery and the operation has been claimed as a success.

The 31-year old international has regained consciousness after being treated for a complaint known as hydrocephalus, a condition where too much fluid surrounds the brain.

In similar fashion, Blackburn's Colin Hendry will have a brain scan after being knocked out for over two minutes by team mate Tim Flowers during a Premier League match.

Colin Hendry: Precautionary brain scan.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

MIDDLESBROUGH MANAGER Bryan Robson is to order striker Fabrizio Ravanelli to return to the Riverside Stadium early next week.

The Italian superstar was sent home before the weekend by Robson and missed the victory at Tranmere because of his mental state following weeks of transfer speculation.

It was assumed that Ravanelli would be left in Italy to sort out his future, but after Boro's 1-1 draw at Stockport Robson made it clear that the Italian would be returning to England.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

WATFORD MANAGER Graham Taylor had two reasons to celebrate - winning the Second Division manager of the month award and steering his side to the top of the table.

Wycombe are another upwardly-mobile side after two goals by Mark Stallard and one each from John Cornforth and Paul Read helped them to a 4-1 win over Southend, who had Keith Dublin sent off.

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DAVID SEAL, Bristol City's almost forgotten Australian striker, has been loaned to Northampton Town this term and is repaying the Cobblers in kind.

When Northampton met City recently, Seal scored the first goal against his 'real club' and set-up the second as his 'loan side' won the match. He went one better against lowly Carlisle when netting both goals of the game away from home.

David Seal: Doing what he does best.

Perhaps he was just trying to remind the Robins why they had bought him in the first place?

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

HERE'S AN odd fact, Brentford beat a Gillingham outfit which had no fewer than six of their former team-mates in the side. Their 2-0 win came courtesy of goals from Marcus Bent and Bob Taylor.

David Pleat has stepped up his search for new players for his Sheffield Wednesday side after hearing that Graham Hyde will be out for at least a month through injury.

Blackburn have a new signing in the form of 28-year old Norwegian centre-back Tore Pedersen. He was to have completed his move from German side St Paulii last week.

Kenny Dalglish was also chasing a Norwegian, Petter Rudi, although it now seems he has lost the battle to Premiership rivals Southampton.

Rudi will become the south coast side's record signing this week. (At 3 million dollars, it shows the gulf between the clubs in the Premiership, let alone between the leagues).

The midfielder decided to join Southampton, to link-up with his international team-mates Egil Ostenstadt and Claus Lundekvam at the Dell.

ABSW news in BRIEF

Newcastle Topper Breakers have taken a new approach by appointing 24 year old Shane Pryce as their new captain for the upcoming Ericsson Cup campaign.

Pryce, who has played 46 times in the National League, will probably be — notwithstanding other appointments — the youngest skipper in the competition.

He told ABSW: "When I started out I just wanted to get into the first eleven on a regular basis. I never thought I'd become the captain of the side."

♦♦♦♦♦

RUMOUR has it that Paul Bilokapic will also take up the Captain's armband for Sydney United this term.

He impressed in the recent 4-2 win over Canterbury-Marrickville pre-season trial match. Tony Krslovic bagged two goals with Jason Culina and a 'triallist' netting the other two.

♦♦♦♦♦

KASEY WEHRMAN is to undergo surgery on the ankle injury that has plagued him for the past eight weeks.

The fracture has failed to heal properly and will require pins and a possible bone graft.

This will not help the Strikers as they prepare to defend their crown which was won in front of over 40,000 fans back in May.

Player coach, Frank Farina, commented: "It is very disappointing to lose Kasey but it is more important to get him right for his long term well being."

Wehrman is one of the young rising talents of Australian Soccer and we wish him a speedy recovery. The Ericsson Cup needs players such as the 'Kid from Kloncurry' to add sparkle to the competition.

♦♦♦♦♦

MOVES NORTH of the Harbour City have seen Pittwater, Manly, Warringah and Mosman areas united under the Manly Warringah Soccer Association umbrella.

Negotiations have been taking place over the last eighteen months but all parties have now reached an amicable agreement and see this as the way forward for the game in the district.

The Association President, Ms Linda Ward, quickly emphasised this was not a takeover of the Warringah Dolphins, but a unification of the Soccer bodies in the area.

♦♦♦♦♦

At a recent VSF tribunal, Frankston Strikers and Altona City were ordered to replay their Division Two State League match. Altona won the original Round 11 match 3-0 but Frankston protested to FIFA, who subsequently intervened.

The problems began when Frankston were awarded a penalty with Altona 1-0 ahead.

The spot kick was converted but the referee blew the whistle for 'encroachment in the area' by some Frankston players.

As ever, an animated discussion ensued after which the referee awarded a free-kick to Altona without allowing any Strikers' player to retake the spot kick.

It comes as no great shock to find Altona will be appealing against this latest decision.

♦♦♦♦♦

PAUL WADE is rumoured to be making a comeback .. in the Healthpact Sixth Australian Masters Games to be held in Canberra this October.

Competitors have the opportunity to compete in any of 31 sports, Soccer attracting many, and these games look to be the largest held to date. Most taking part are expected to be between 30-50 years of age but the organisers say: "These games are not about a bunch of oldies jogging about".

Bet Wadey's glad to hear it!

♦♦♦♦♦

NEWCASTLE TOPPER BREAKERS will run a bus to their Waratah Cup Match with Marconi.

DATE:
10th September, 1997.

VENUE:
Marconi Stadium.

KICK-OFF:
8.15pm.
Meet at the Club at 3.30pm for pre-match departure at 4.15pm.

Kasey Wehrman: Needed to add sparkle.

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Bonnyrigg White Eagles

NSW GRAND FINAL RUNNERS-UP 1997 SQUAD FEATURING: MIKE GIBSON, MILAN GAJIC, ROBERT SACCO, GARY VAN EGMOND, DRAGAN NOVAKOVIC, PAT AGIUS, JAMES WARBURTON, GRAHAM WATTON, PAUL DEE, PAUL RICHARDSON, JOHNNY GHISSO, STEFAN JANIC, MILAN SAVIC, DANIEL CROWDEN.